

Morrisville police support local Special Olympics

By Mary Beth Phillips
Staff Writer

T-shirts and caps are selling like hot cakes at the Morrisville Police Department, and the town hopes to be one of the top selling law enforcement agencies who participated in the benefit for the Special Olympics—and have their name on next year's T-shirt.

So, far, Sgt. Ira W. Jones has deposited over \$3,000 in donations and T-shirt sales, and he says he is just getting started.

This is the first year Morrisville has participated in the T-shirt sale. Chief Robert Whitesell asked Jones to head up the effort, and he has visited local businesses seeking donations along with selling the shirts and caps.

Shirts or caps cost \$13 each, and are available at the police station or from any police officer. Donations are also welcome.

Jones knows that Morrisville will probably not be the top-selling law enforcement agency. Over 200 agencies are participating, including the Department of Corrections,

Last year, the Raleigh Police Department raised over \$60,000. But even if Morrisville is not on next year's T-shirt, the effort won't be wasted.

"It's for a good cause," Jones said. Jones explained that this benefit is not for the much-touted Special Olympics World Games which are coming to the Triangle this summer, but for the local Special Olympics, where mentally handicapped people in the Triangle area might qualify to participate in the World Games.

Local police officers have also volunteered to help with the World Games. Those that didn't volunteer will assist at the airport as people from all over the world converge on the Triangle for the event.

The Morrisville Police Department will also participate in the Torch Run for both events. The local Torch Run will be held May 3 through 21. The World Games Torch Run will be held June 18—26. The route is not yet known, but last year, Morrisville officers carried the torch down a section of N.C. 54.

Bosnian man starts new life in North Carolina

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ing water from a well at the rubble of a school in the small area where he lived when the grenade exploded. It killed seven people and wounded 30 or 40 people, mostly women and children. Fortunately, the hospital was only about 200 feet from the school, or Smajic would have bled to death.

After the war, his brother, Enes, and his family were accepted as refugees to the United States, and Smajic hoped he could eventually follow them. That dream came true on January 12 of this year.

America is everything he dreamed it would be, except, "some people are afraid when they hear I am from Bosnia. They are looking if I have guns or rifles. They don't understand what was going on there," he said.

Nate and Carolyn Carson, who run Bloomin' Orchids nursery in Morrisville, helped Enes to get his start, and now they have hired Edin to work in the nursery. Soon he will move into a house they own next to the nursery.

"He's very thorough. He does what he does well, and he's expanding his horizons just as quickly as he can," Carson said. Along with Enes and his wife, Jelena, who worked in the nursery about a year before taking a job in the RTP assembling computer components, Carson said, "Their work ethic is excellent. I've not been sorry a minute [to have hired them]."

Smajic is grateful to Carson and likes working in the nursery. "He and his family remind me of the film *Gone with the Wind*. That spirit is in his family," he said. "They are very hospitable. He is a kind old Southern gentleman."

Smajic knows he is lucky to be here.

"There are many people who deserve to come here. They have suffered a lot; they have no future there. But they can't come here. You must have someone who will give you a flat (the word used in English for apartment—Smajic's English is full of such words and phrases)."

While Smajic was recovering from his wound in the hospital "Papa Holbrooke," U.S. Special Envoy Richard Holbrooke came to Bosnia to negotiate a peace settlement. "He came to give us a new life," Smajic said. "Perhaps he doesn't know how some of the people are grateful to him." By the time Smajic was out of the hospital, the war in his area was over.

Smajic was born a Bosnian, but he does not consider himself part of any ethnic group. He calls himself the fourth nation. "There are Bosnians, Serbs and Croats, and then there are the people who don't want to be like the others."

"I did not want to make war. I was forced to be there. I avoided to shoot," he said. There were many like him. He heard of grenades thrown with the pins intact and notes attached saying, "We are not the same." Along parts of the front line, informal treaties were made, and soldiers would warn their enemies when higher officials would come and force them to resume fighting. Along the border that Smajic was protecting, shots were never fired.

"In the beginning, the Bosnians and the Croats were right to defend their country," Smajic said. "But after a while, you don't know who you are fighting against. You think there are devils on the other side. That's not true. They are people."

He said the Serbs made up 40 or 45 percent of the ex-Yugoslavian popu-

lation and Montenegro Orthodox, which were similar to Serbs, brought the total to over half. About 99 percent of the military officers were Serbs.

"Other areas could have made unions, but they wanted to make their own empires," he said. For example, Bosnian and ethnic Albanian families made a pact to have at least five children, and many had up to 10 or 12 kids. "It was a way to make domination," Smajic explained. "In 40 or 50 years, there would be 99 percent ethnic Albanians. That's why the Serbs hurried to fight."

Enes and his family came to America in April of 1997, sponsored by a Methodist and Episcopal Church in the historic Oakwood area of Raleigh. His wife, Jelena, started out working with her husband in the Bloomin' Orchids nursery, and now works at Sanmina Corp. His son, Yasmin, attends West Cary Middle School. They have earned enough money to buy their own townhouse in Trappers Run in Cary.

When the war officially ended in December of 1995, Smajic applied for a passport to Croatia, where another brother lives, and received it with no problem. "Many guys like me wanted to leave. They didn't need us anymore; they didn't have jobs for us."

But he couldn't get a visa, which would allow him to leave the area of the former Yugoslavia. "All European countries closed their border lines," he said. "The only places that received refugees other than America were Australia, New Zealand and Canada."

He knew that if he was unsuccessful resettling to the U.S., he could try again to one of the other countries. But he is glad he was allowed to come here.

"I like the culture and the history, and the rock 'n' roll music," he said. His favorites, and records he listened to in Bosnia include Lynyrd Skynyrd, Ted Nugent, the Doors, the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane and Janis Joplin. His nephew has

been a great help to him because "he talks a lot and he likes the same kind of music I like."

He lived with his brother in Croatia for two years, which was a lot of time to improve his English. He had no permanent job because he had no work permit, but he could help build houses on a temporary basis, and he gave English lessons to children, making 10 German marks (about \$6) an hour.

He applied with the Catholic Commission for Resettlement in Croatia, which is connected with Lutheran Family Services in America. He then waited over a year for an answer.

"For my nerves, it was a terrible situation," he said.

In the group he came over with, everyone had a friend or family member who they would be staying with. He made friends, and has been helping some of them with their English, along with another Bosnian family that was sponsored by New Horizons Fellowship in Apex. He has attended church there some, and also attends Landmark Baptist Church in Cary, near where his brother lives.

He probably won't convert to Christianity, but "I am open to positive influences. I like to see and talk to people, to exchange thoughts and ideas." He mentioned a recent conversation with a group of American Baptists about The Rime of the Ancient Mariner and how it relates to the Bible regarding sin and punishment.

"The love that must fill your heart if you want your sin forgiven . . . I lived that poem, that topic," he said. He has a copy of Coleridge's poems in Croatian—the author's name on the cover is spelled "Koldridz." It is one of the few things he brought with him—clothing and books were his only possessions.

His future plans are not lavish. He will buy a guitar, and maybe a motorcycle. "I know America needs people with big dreams, but I just want to be an average citizen, with an average salary, an average house, an average wife," he said.

Business after hours at Summit Apt.

Business After Hours will be held today, March 25, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at Summit Westwood Apartments, 2010 Summit Ridge Loop, just off N.C. 54 across from Weston Apartments.

The next Issues & Eggs breakfast will be held April 15th, featuring Betty Mangum, Wake County Commissioner, from 7:45 to 9:00 a.m. at the Golden Corral on N.C. 54 at Park Place Shopping Center.

The May Business After Hours will be May 11 at Capi's on Airport and 54 from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

New Bern: Home & Garden Tour & Tryon Palace
April 10-11 - New Bern was founded in 1710 and was later to become the first capital of the newly independent State of North Carolina. Tryon Palace was home to Colonial governor William Tryon, and several later governors. We'll visit the Palace and gardens, and tour many of the lovely old homes and gardens in New Bern during their annual Home & Garden Tour. City tour, hotel & 3 meals. Price (per person) Double:\$194 Single:\$228 Trip/Quad:\$180 - \$50 dep. due 3/11/99

Charleston: Gardens, Mansions & Mummies
April 24-25 - Cypress Gardens, Boone Hall (where the series "North & South" was filmed), Patriot's Point Military Museum, Ft. Sumpter, dinner cruise, city tour, the City Market AND a special Egyptian exhibit at the Charleston Museum! Price (per person) Double:\$320 Single:\$430 Triple/Quad:\$285 - \$50 dep. due 3/13/99

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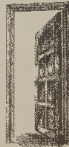
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Free soccer, tennis clinics in April

A free David Allred soccer clinic for ages 5 to 12 will be held Sunday, April 11 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Registration is required.

A free tennis mini-clinic for children and adults will be held May 1 from 10 a.m. to noon. Registration is required.

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Directions: On Crabtree Crossing near the intersection of Morrisville Parkway

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These renderings are for illustrative purposes only and are not guaranteed to represent final site/building plan details.