

# 902nd jumps to help community

by Tina Miles  
902nd MI Group

For the fifth consecutive year, the Anne Arundel community gathered together to support "Run, Jump 'n' Throw" - an invitational that partners special needs students with those who are non-disabled in a Special Olympics type competition.

Included among the more than 100 volunteers at the event were many personnel from the 902nd Military Intelligence Group.

The yearly event sponsored by Partners for Success, Special Olympics Maryland and others was held at Ridgeway Elementary School in Severn, Md., May 29.

Partners for Success is an Anne Arundel County resource center for families and schools

having children with disabilities and is a partnership between the Maryland State Department of Education and the local school system. One of the annual activities provided is the Ridgeway Invitational, also called "Run, Jump 'n' Throw."

This year's Olympians were from Ridgeway Elementary, Marley Elementary, Millersville Elementary, Brock Bridge Elementary and Meade Heights Elementary, with whom the 902nd MI Group volunteers as a Partner in Education.

The invitational consists of four events: standing long-jump, 50-meter dash, softball throw, and a turbo-javelin competition.

The 902nd MI Group volunteers served as escorts, event monitors and scorekeepers. The escorts followed their

athletes to each event, tracking score-cards and keeping the groups organized. As they moved from one venue to the next, including lunch together, they shared jokes and, more importantly, enjoyed their newfound friendships.

The good-sportsmanship was only upped by the shouts of support and signs waved by fellow elementary students as each athlete took their starting positions and gave each competition their best effort.

At the closing of the event, each Special Olympian was awarded an achievement medal which they proudly displayed around their necks for all to see.

Volunteers also received medals, but they are the kind carried in the heart, not displayed.



photo by Tina Miles

**Spectators cheer as athletes run past them in the 50-meter dash during the Ridgeway Invitational May 29.**