



Powered by Clickability

Hosts, helpers rally for Maccabi Games

Athletes also take time out from competition for Akron-area service projects

By Bill Lilley
Beacon Journal staff writer

Published on Wednesday, Aug 13, 2008

Seventy-year-old Faye Regal believes you're never too old to have fun playing mom.

That was the primary reason she and her husband, Akron attorney Edwin Regal, jumped at the opportunity to host athletes at their West Akron condo during the Akron JCC Maccabi Games.

This week, the Regals have two 13-year-old "daughters" — South New Jersey girls soccer teammates Alexandra Edelman and Randi Stecki.

"A lot of people in their 60s and 70s are housing kids this week," Faye Regal said. "They brought us out of the woodwork. . . . We're having a great time with our new kids. The experience really takes us back. I feel like these kids are my own, at least this week."

The Regals raised a son and daughter, but have been empty-nesters ever since their daughter got married two decades ago.

They are one of 121 families in the Akron area hosting the 350 Jewish athletes. They also are volunteers during the competition and work at the tennis matches.

"The best thing about housing the kids is that they are just like grandchildren," Faye Regal said. "You have them for a while to enjoy, and then after the week you turn them back over to their parents."

Plenty of help

Volunteers for the Maccabi Games keep coming in.

"The latest count is 607, which is simply incredible for a city the size of Akron," said Susan McMains, volunteers chairwoman. "Most communities that host the Maccabi Games just use the Jewish community to fill the slots. But we aren't big enough for that. We've got 2,000 shifts to cover in six days and we use the entire community."

McMains had high praise for the city of Akron, which provided a huge database of volunteers to contact.

The CYO, YMCA, RSVP, Leadership Akron, United Way, the University of Akron's Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority, the Hakoah Club and three hospitals — Akron Children's, Summa and Akron General — were especially responsive to the request for help, McMains said.

"It is simply incredible the way the entire community responded," she said. "We knew going into this that we could count on the people of Akron to cover our back. And they did."

Day of caring

Athletic competition will only be staged in the morning today so that the athletes, coaches and administrators of the Maccabi Games can participate in a Day of Caring and Sharing.

Participants will be working from 1 to 5 p.m. to beautify new green space at Lock 3 Park, create a bog at Camp Y-Noah, work with special-needs children at Rex Lake Camp and spend the afternoon with older adults and adults with special needs at Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority buildings.

Bill Lilley can be reached at 330-996-3811 or blilley@thebeaconjournal.com.

Find this article at:

<http://www.ohio.com/news/26900039.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

Copyright © 2008 Ohio.com