

(February 13, 2009 - Boise, Idaho) Fiddlin' Foresters participate in the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Idaho.



Idaho hosted the [2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games](#) from February 6-13, 2009. Events took place on national forest land at ski resorts under permit with the Forest Service, and adjoining or nearby lands and facilities. The Games attracted some 2,000 athletes from 100 nations competing in seven Olympic-type sports.

Approximately 6,000 volunteers and 15,000 spectators participated. The 2009 World Games provided a unique opportunity for the [Boise National Forest](#) and [Sawtooth National Forest](#) to showcase winter recreation, public lands, and conservation education programs.

On Sunday, February 8 and Tuesday, February 10, Fiddlin' Foresters performed at the Special Olympics Festival at the Center in the Grove in downtown Boise. The Festival served as a central hub of activity in Boise for three days during the Games, while Sun Valley hosted a special one-night Festival-type evening.

The Special Olympics Festival was open to the public and offered a variety of live music and entertainment, activities, food and beverage; and the opportunity to buy Official 2009 World Winter Games merchandise. It was also the site of the Sports Experience which allowed guests attending the World Games to experience the talents and personalities of Special Olympics athletes by providing an interactive space for guests to learn more about Special Olympics and play various sports with the athletes.



Fiddlin' Foresters performed at the Special Olympics Festival in downtown Boise, ID on February 8th and 10<sup>th</sup>.

The Boise and Sawtooth National Forests provided a booth at the Special Olympics Festival to help strengthen ties with people, communities and cultures. Conveying the importance of recreation, water, and outdoor education was a highlighted theme.

The Fiddlin' Foresters provided entertaining songs and tunes, woven with conservation messages and information about public lands. The audience, especially the Special Olympic athletes, enjoyed the foot-stomping presentation.



Smokey Bear greets the crowd as the Fiddlin' Foresters play his song at Special Olympics Festival.



Jane Leche sings about national forests on the cold outdoor stage.

We each received an official 2009 World Winter Games hand-knitted scarf. What started out as a simple Special Olympics project to provide a warm scarf to each of the more than 2,000 Special Olympics athletes participating in the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games, grew into an international phenomenon. Instead of 2,000 scarves, the Special Olympics Games Organizing Committee received more than 60,000 scarves. Scarves – all hand-knitted or crocheted in the World Games' blue and white color scheme – were received from all 50 U.S. states and from countries around the world.



Jim Maxwell on an outdoor stage picking his banjo in the extreme cold. He said it was tough on his fingers!



Photo of Lynn Young playing fiddle on the outdoor stage. He joined along singing about national forests and their importance to winter sports.

On Wednesday evening we performed outdoors at the Sun Valley Inn in the Sun Valley area in Ketchum, ID. Once again, our hour-long concert stressed the importance of national forests and public lands. The beautiful setting was cold...only 7 degrees when we began our performance...but the audience kept warm by dancing with Smokey and Woodsy during the lively performance. The cold is hard on instrument tuning and fingers.



Fiddlin' Foresters perform in the cold at the Sun Valley Special Olympics Festival to a lively audience on February 11.



The Sun Valley Festival featured the Fiddlin' Foresters along with Smokey and Woodsy.

**Dave Olson** from the Boise NF did a great job of hosting us and making us feel comfortable in spite of the cold. It required a tremendous amount of work on the part of the Boise and Sawtooth National Forests to host such an event.



The US Forest Service provided a booth at the Special Olympics Festival to showcase winter recreation, public lands, and conservation education programs.

Long time friend, **Kari Greer**, [Kari Greer Photography](#), was the official Forest Service photographer and provided us with most of these wonderful photographs. She's the best!



Fiddlin' Foresters pose with some Italian Special Olympics athletes at the 2009 World Winter Games in Idaho.