Claregalway/Lackagh Community Games
Secretary's Report 2009

2009 was another successful year for Community games in the area with at least 300 children competing at local, county, provincial and national level. The area competed in a wide range of activities allowing children with different talents and abilities to experience the joy of participation and success. 45 local children qualified to compete in the National finals in Athlone over the three weekends. These were in activities as diverse as basketball, olympic handball, dancing and athletics.

Athletics
The area always features highly in athletics due in no small part to the weekly training sessions run by Pauline Harrington. Up to 30 children attend these sessions which are, for many, their first introduction to athletics. The highlight of the year, as always, was the local annual sports day which was held in Dangan again this year. It was a beautiful day and a great time was had by all. We were very successful in the county finals with a total pf 26 medals achieved. 9 children qualified for the national athletics finals. Congratulations to Cliona Ni Cochlain who achieved a gold medal in the National U10 hurdles final.

Swimming

The swimming gala this year was very kindly organised in Clarinbridge pool by Joe Kennelly of Cregmore National School. The turnout on the day was very disappointing with very few children competing. However, those that did compete enjoyed themselves. Thanks to Joe and to to Brid Moran who assisted him.

Olympic Handball
Both the boys and girls Olympic Handball teams qualified for the National finals and both achieved Bronze. Well done to Pauline and Pat Hansbury for their efforts.

Basketball
4 panels of 10 players competed in U13 and U15 boys' and girls' competitions at county level. Despite stiff competition the girls U16 team qualified for the National Finals and achieved gold..

Football, Hurling, Camogie
GAA games was another huge success for the area with 75 children competing in boys and girls football, hurling and camogie. Both the hurlers and the girls footballers qualified for Mosney both teams achieving silver medals. The boys and girls footballers and the hurlers all reached the county final which was a huge achievement. Both football teams qualified for the Connaughts. Unfortunately the hurlers just missed out in a tightly fought final. But all disappointment was forgotten when all the teams met up for refreshments in the Central Tavern afterwards.

Soccer
A soccer team were entered in the county competition but luck was not on their side this year and they were heartbreakingly beaten after extra time and penalties in their first match against Cois Fharaige

Chess
About 20 children were involved in the under 12 and u16 chess competitions locally and 2 panels of 5 made up the area teams which both took bronze at the county competition in Ballinasloe in February. These two young teams played very well and most of them are still underage for 2010. From small beginnings a few years ago, chess in the area is going from strength to strength.

Art
Once again a huge local entry was facilitated through cooperation with 4 local schools. 8 children were selected to represent the area at the county finals at various age groups. Adam Healy took gold at the county finals and went on to represent the area at the National Finals. Thanks to Geraldine Dunleavy for organising the local competition.

Talent Competition

Three local dancers took gold in the Group Traditional Dance section of the County Talent Competition. They qualified to compete in Athlone in May and were delighted to achieve 4th place medals out of a field of 20 groups from all over the country.

Fundraising and Sponsorship

We held a bag packing weekend in Dunnes – thanks and well done to all the children and their parents who supported that. We also held a church gate collection in all three of our local churches which was very generously supported. Our 2nd Annual Camel Racing night was held in July. The night was a great success both as a social occasion and as a fundraiser. Many thanks to all who supported the night but especially to our sponsors without whom Community Games could not continue. We are grateful for their continuing support even in these difficult times. We would ask that all who have an interest in Community Games make every effort to support them if at all possible. Our sponsors this year were:

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Website

We set up a website (www.claregalwaylackaghcommunitygames.com) this year which helps greatly with communications. Any comments or suggestions are always welcome to info@claregalwaylackaghcommunitygames.com.

Wrap Up
The competition year was wrapped up by a small party in the Central Tavern to mark the achievements of all the children who competed in Athlone. Refreshments were served and a good night was had by all.

Thanks
Sincere thanks to all who helped in any way during the year to run the games locally - managers who prepared teams for competition, parents who pitched in on the day, and all on the committee who put in so much work behind the scenes. Most of all thanks to the children who took part in the various events with so much enthusiasm. They were all brilliant and we look forward to seeing them all again next year.