

## The 'Difference Makers' Among Us

When one of the co-founders of the Cape Cod Challenger Club—an organization that offers athletic, creative, and social activities for people with developmental and physical disabilities—got word that he was going to be honored by the New England Patriots for his volunteer work, his first thought was not of himself.

"My initial question was: Does this come with a generous donation from the Kraft Foundation," said Kelvin Ing of Sandwich, "because that's what we really need."

He also wondered why he was the one being singled out, and not his wife, Amy Lipkind ("She's the brains of the organization.") or one of the many other volunteers who make up the Challenger Club ("This is definitely a group effort.").

But the brief phone call two weeks ago from Patriots community relations coordinator Dan MacPherson ended before Mr. Ing got the answer to any of those questions.

About all that Mr. Ing knows for sure right now is that on Christmas Eve, during the Patriots' last regular season home game at Gillette Stadium in Foxboro, he and 14 other "Difference Makers" from throughout New England will be celebrated during a half-time ceremony.

It's quite an honor.

Each week, for the Patriots' 15-week season, one "Difference Maker" is spotlighted. This week was Mr. Ing's. He was profiled on the Patriots' website and was featured in Patriots Football Weekly and Patriots Game Day magazine.

"I heard from a few people who were at Sunday's game and saw it in the magazine," Mr. Ing said. "Amy and I still haven't seen it."

The Patriots' website states why the organization chooses to celebrate volunteers like Mr. Ing.

"The initiative aims to share examples of dedicated volunteers, build awareness of the need for volunteering, identify and educate others about volunteer opportunities and inspire New Englanders," the website states. "Throughout the season, the Kraft

family and New England Patriots Charitable Foundation will celebrate volunteers that work tirelessly to support children and families in need throughout the New England region."

The profile of Mr. Ing on the site points to his "vision and dedication" and states that "while he is responsible for many roles as the founder of the organization, his favorite position is 'Coach.'"

Mr. Ing is not entirely comfortable with all the praise.

In an e-mail to the Patriots' organization, he expressed his thanks for the honor, but stressed that he alone is not the Challenger Club.

"Like the Patriots, the Cape Cod Challenger Club's success is truly a team effort," he wrote.

But like it or not, it is Mr. Ing who is in the spotlight and will be on the field at half-time, come December 24.

"I'm really hoping they'll let me take some of our kids on the field," he said.

By "our kids," Mr. Ing was referring to the more than 400 children (and now adults) who participate in Challenger Club programs, which range from year-round athletic and recreational opportunities (such as baseball, soccer, bowling, horseback riding and martial arts) to social gatherings, including dances and holiday parties. All of it is run by volunteers and free to participants.

What started out as an idea to provide a handful of disabled youngsters with a chance for some springtime baseball on a ball field behind the former Henry T. Wing School back in 2005 has grown at a phenomenal pace.

We congratulate Mr. Ing for the much-deserved praise he received from the Patriots' organization and the regional exposure it provides to the club. But just as importantly, we salute Ms. Lipkind. It has been this husband and wife team—with the help of hundreds of other volunteers—that has enabled the Challenger Club to grow from a simple baseball game into the nonprofit organization that it is today.