



2006 Special Olympics USA National Games Law Enforcement Torch Run® (LETR) Final Leg Fact Sheet

WHAT:

The Law Enforcement Torch Run® (LETR) Final Leg joins together law enforcement officers with Special Olympics athletes from around the country to act as “Guardians of the Flame,” carrying the Special Olympics Torch and “Flame of Hope” to the Opening Ceremonies of the inaugural Special Olympics USA National Games. This Torch Run event is called the ‘Final Leg’ because it represents the culmination of Torch Run events that have occurred previously throughout the United States.

The Olympic flame symbolizes the light of spirit, knowledge and life. Runners will carry a torch designed exclusively for the inaugural USA National Games.

The first Law Enforcement Torch Run® was initiated in 1981 by Wichita, Kansas Police Chief Richard LaMunyon. Identifying a need to raise money and awareness for Special Olympics, Officer LaMunyon created the Torch Run as a way for local law enforcement officials to support Special Olympics. Twenty five years after its inception, the LETR is Special Olympics’ largest grass-roots fundraiser and public awareness vehicle, raising more than \$21.5 million for Special Olympics programs in 2005 alone.

Nearly 90 individual communities will welcome the Final Leg runners with community-wide celebrations as they make their way through Illinois and Iowa.

WHO:

More than 100 participants including:
60 law enforcement officers
9 Special Olympics athletes
40 support team members

48 states as well as the District of Columbia will be represented.

A complete list of final leg team members, including their home states, is available online at www.2006nationalgames.org/news/factsheets.php

WHEN/WHERE:

June 24, 2006

9 a.m. - “Flame of Hope” Lighting Ceremony at Soldier Field in Chicago
11:50 a.m. – Pre-game ceremony at U.S. Cellular Field
1:45 p.m. – Torch Run up Michigan Avenue’s “Magnificent Mile” in Chicago

June 25, 2006

Flame travels across Illinois
4:40 p.m. - Torch arrives at Rock Island Arsenal, Rock Island, IL

5:00 p.m. - Torch is run from Memorial Park to Government Bridge
5:30 p.m. - Coast Guard Cutter is loaded at Government Bridge
6:00 p.m. - U.S. Coast Guard Cutter transports "Flame of Hope" across Mississippi River from Rock Island, Illinois to Davenport, Iowa.
6:10 p.m. - Boat arrives at Davenport Sailing Club for a 25-minute ceremony
6:35 p.m. - Torch runs to Genesis East Hospital in Davenport
6:50 p.m. - Ceremony at Genesis East

June 26 – July 1, 2006

Flame travels across Iowa via three routes covering approximately 80 Iowa communities.

July 2, 2006

9:00 p.m. - LETR Final Leg concludes in Ames, Iowa with lighting of the cauldron at Opening Ceremonies

WHY: The primary goal of the LETR Final Leg is to raise awareness of the 2006 Special Olympics USA National Games, encouraging support and attendance.

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For more information please visit www.2006nationalgames.org.