

Fall 2013

# The Guardian

The Newsletter of the Law Enforcement Torch Run® Executive Council



# Inside this issue:

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| <i>Chairman's Corner</i>   | 3     |
| <i>2013 International Conference Recap</i>                                   | 4-5   |
| <i>Elena Weaver — 2013 LETR Int'l Executive Council Athlete Award Winner</i> | 6     |
| <i>LETR — Police Service of Northern Ireland</i>                             | 7-8   |
| <i>More European LETR News</i>   | 9     |
| <i>Torch Run Success Through Planning</i>                                    | 10-12 |
| <i>2014 International LETR Conference — Louisiana</i>                        | 12    |
| <i>LETR Final Leg for SO 2013 Asia Pacific Games</i>                         | 13-15 |
| <i>2013 IACP Photo Contest Winners</i>                                       | 16-20 |
| <i>Missouri LETR Kick-off and Awards Brunch</i>                              | 21-22 |
| <i>LETR Portugal</i>   | 23    |
| <i>Volunteering Together to Champion Acceptance and Inclusion</i>            | 24    |
| <i>BC LETR Brings Passion, Expertise to SO Fitness Program</i>               | 25-26 |
| <i>Regional Coordinators</i>   | 27    |

Front Cover Photo Montage provided by: Andrea Kramer

## CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

### Mike Peretti, LETR Executive Council

Best wishes to everyone and Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and you look forward to an active and prosperous year for your Torch Run program. On the heels of another outstanding conference, I would like to congratulate the International Conference Planning Committee and the Florida Host Conference Planning Committee for their work and leaving us, once again, motivated, inspired and educated. Oh, and how can I forget to congratulate everyone again on the amazing funds raised in 2012....\$46,325,747, another high!

Moving forward, in 2014 Council will continue its focus on international growth. Since the conference in November, a delegation from the Executive Council has already visited New Zealand and Australia and has returned with strategies to assist the development of programs in the region. Also, discussions are underway to develop regional meetings in Asia for Torch Run Programs in June, and plans for the revitalization of programs in the Caribbean will be implemented.

Other critical materials and information to look for in the coming months include the 2015 World Games Final Leg forms and nomination packets as Council will be moving forward with finalizing the event plans. Also, information regarding the 2014 LETR Conference in New Orleans will be sent to your program directors and liaisons.

**IMPORTANT.** . .**Remember the 2014 conference is September 10, 11 & 12, Wednesday – Friday this year.** All registration requirements and nominations for Athlete, Carion, and Hall of Fame awards will be sent out early this year with an earlier return date. Do not miss the opportunity to nominate deserving Torch Runners for these awards. Watch for the dates!

Lastly, the LETR Executive Council is proud to have released its new LETR web site, [www.lettr.org](http://www.lettr.org), at the conference in Florida. This site is operational and houses many resources for programs. The Council looks forward to bringing you more information throughout the year through the web site. Be sure to take a look.

Lets raise the bar again in 2014 and keep the Flame Burning Bright!



Lt. Mike Peretti (Ret.)  
Chair, LETR Executive Council

## 2013 LETR International Conference Recap

### Dave Sklarek, Chief Deputy — Osceola County Sheriff's Office

The ducks were plucked, the athletes were amazing, a new brand was introduced, the speakers were inspiring, the run is complete, the World Classic Rockers are performing elsewhere, and the Torch has left for New Orleans. I think that about covers it. Two years of planning went into the 2013 LETR International Conference in Orlando and the planning committee hopes you left eager to make dreams come true for athletes in your program.

Wednesday was a hustle, bustle day when most of the guests arrived. Hospitality night was very well attended. Who would ever think that you could raise over \$8,000 plucking a rubber duck out of a fountain. Thanks to the winner from Delaware LETR who donated his share back to Special Olympics. The opening ceremony on Thursday was exciting with the arrival of the Flame of Hope all the way from Indianapolis. Bart Connor, U.S. Inductee in the International Gymnastics Hall of Fame, inspired all of us, and April Holmes left us speechless at the Founders Luncheon. On Thursday night Florida hosted at the Silver Spurs Arena a most memorable dinner and concert by some of Rock and Roll's living legends. Feedback from the concert was that it was one of the best Host Nights ever.

Congratulations to all of the honorees at the Honors Luncheon. The committees had a difficult time selecting just a few winners from all of the nominations. The Live and Silent auction on Friday night was one of the best and raised over \$22,000. Thank you to all who participated and especially to all who donated. A special thanks to one of Florida's athletes, Katy Henderson, who attended the conference. Katy is a world-renowned artist who created a painting on site and then donated it to the live auction. We also had a number of hand-made quilts and a collection of over 400 challenge coins.

The last day of the conference began at the crack of dawn with a Torch Run through Disney's Hollywood Studios. The event was extremely well attended. Fantasia Gardens played host to the Unified Sporting event, Putt-Putt golf, which included a Disney lunch. The Conference concluded Saturday night at the Hall of Fame Banquet. Dr. Dot Richardson lit up the room as one of the most memorable keynote speakers. Dot re-lived her story of becoming the youngest woman to ever play professional softball. Her message to never give up, despite adversity, will be remembered by all.

The Florida LETR Host Committee hopes everyone who attended the conference enjoyed their visit to the vacation capital of the world and went home with a burning desire to improve the lives of people with intellectual disabilities. The Torch is now in the capable hands of the committee in New Orleans. We will see you all next September.



## 2013 LETR International Conference In Pictures

THE GUARDIAN



THE GUARDIAN



***Elena Weaver — 2013 LETR International Executive  
Council Athlete Award Winner***

2013 LETR International Executive Council Athlete Award winner Elena Weaver is a talented athlete who has been involved in Special Olympics Georgia's program for many years. Elena has served on the LETR Executive Council here in Georgia, has run the torch in State Games Opening Ceremonies, has joined in the torch run to the State Summer Games, has given countless public speeches about Special Olympics Georgia and the Law Enforcement Torch Run, worked tirelessly at the State Office, attended and worked countless LETR special events and has been the number ONE fan of Special Olympics Georgia's Law Enforcement Torch Run for YEARS! Elena reminds us all how important the LETR is to the organization and more importantly how incredible the officers are as they support our cause day to day. The momentum that Elena has to keep things going is unmatched. She is a true champion.

Elena Weaver was selected as a winner of the 2013 LETR International Executive Council Athlete Award. She will accepted her award at the 2013 International Law Enforcement Torch Run Conference in Orlando, Florida during the Honors Luncheon on Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup>. Special Olympics Georgia and the Law Enforcement Torch Run of Georgia are truly honored and proud to have such a positive and spirited Athlete receive this award. Congratulations Elena Weaver!

"Our lives would be very sad, dark and stressful without the bright lights of Special Olympics. They have given Elena and her family a place where we know she is appreciated and dreams really do come true!" (Quote from Ed and Linda Weaver, Elena's parents.)



Special Olympics Georgia Athlete Elena Weaver at the Capitol with Governor Sonny Perdue and Chief Billy Grogan for the Press Conference and ending of the Torch Run to the State Capitol before the kick off of the Special Olympics Georgia State Summer Games.

**Law Enforcement Torch Run®**  
**Police Service of Northern Ireland**  
**Jeremy Adams, Region IX Coordinator**



I am delighted to pen my third report as Chairperson of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, Law Enforcement Torch Run® Committee. We celebrated our tenth year as a committee in 2013 and what a year it has been!! The committee and partners in Special Olympics, colleagues in An Garda Síochána have achieved so much in our anniversary year – opportunities presented by world leading events such as G8, World Police and Fire Games (WPFG) has enabled us to not only showcase the very best our island has to offer but to raise the profile of Special Olympics. You will see in the following pages how collaboration has enabled the very strong and powerful message of a shared future, which focuses on abilities.

I also make no apology for reminding you there is a place for everyone, whether plunging into ice cold water, selling eats, presenting medals or organising visits by the committee to a local school – your help does make a difference.

This report recognises the work of so many unsung heroes – without whose help and assistance we would not have achieved so much. I hope you enjoy reading of our combined successes, the real reward for me and richness in what we do comes through by actively taking part, meeting our athletes and making a real difference.

**Will Kerr**  
**Chairperson**  
**Polar Plunge® – Waterford 8th**  
**December 2012**

Steve, Naomi and Rab headed south of the border complete with the Polar Plunge pool and fancy dress outfits. After meeting up with our Garda colleagues, Gary Gordon and Gavin Hegarty, we set about erecting the pool and getting ready for the plunge. At 10.00 am, a hearty band of Garda colleagues, Firefighters, Special Athletes and victims - eh – that's volunteers

arrived to begin the 8-hour plunge - once on the hour every hour! A great time was had by all, and probably because it was so very cold - and we really were "Freezin' for a Reason" both in and out of the water - we managed to generate a huge amount of publicity, awareness and money for Special Olympics in Munster. Those plunging included local radio presenters, politicians and even an intrepid tourist from Australia took the plunge in his boxer shorts! The event raised a fantastic 8200 euro!

**LETR for the SO World Winter Games and Dublin Airport Send off to Team Ireland 25 January 13**

The LETR (David Smith) organised visits to three schools to raise awareness of the Special Olympic World Winter Games in South Korea. Three athletes travelled from N Ireland with a further eleven from the South of Ireland to the Games to participate in the Alpine Skiing event. The three athletes selected are Lucy Best from Ballinderry, Rosalind Connelly from Portadown and Ryan Hill from Richhill.

The torch visited St. Patrick's Academy, Lisburn then Clounagh JHS in Portadown and finished up at St. Catherine's College in Armagh. Each school provided an amazing reception. Around 200 pupils and staff at each venue. The police torch team, which included a guest from the Garda, the athletes and Special Olympics Ulster representatives were overwhelmed with the generosity of the welcome shown.

A great day was had by everyone and a total of £600 in donations were received from the 3 schools for Special Olympics work in N Ireland. On 25 January 2013

*(Continued on page 8)*

*(Continued from page 7)*

ACC Will Kerr and some members of the LETR (Jill Hoyle and David Smith) travelled to Dublin to see off Team Ireland on their adventure. The PSNI officers joined with their southern colleagues and family members to wish them good luck and give them a warm send off.

### **World Special Olympics Games 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Torch Run – March 2013**

Steve and Naomi accepted Gary Gordon's kind invitation to attend the Torch Run held in Kilkenny to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the World Special Olympics Games being held in Ireland in 2003. This was a fantastic event, well organised by Gary and his team and we were very warmly greeted and welcomed by all concerned. Great emphasis was placed upon the excellent relationship that exists between the PSNI and Garda, and Gary spoke about our personal friendship and how he has been working closely with PSNI on joint initiatives. International LETR visitors from Broward County Sheriffs Department, New York State Police and other U.S. Law Enforcement Agencies were also present and we were delighted to be able to present them with PSNI presentation patches, LETR ties and other small gift items. These were greatly appreciated by all our visitors.

### **St Patricks Day Parade in Armagh City**

For the first time ever the LETR was invited to participate in the St Patricks Day Parade in Armagh. David Smith, Marty Maloney and David McCausland attended on the day and walked the route with the local SO Club, the 'High Rollers'. The welcome was very warm and a best participant prize of £400 was awarded to us by the mayor at a reception held in April.

### **Belfast Marathon 2013**

Coordinated by Andy Watson this was the 10<sup>th</sup> year the LETR has entered teams in the Belfast Marathon Relay. Two teams from the LETR ran with a team of Special Olympics athletes: Amy McAllister, Althea Clarkson, Niall Rainey, James Neeson and Aaron Reid.

Each leg was ran with an athlete and two LETR members bringing up the rear. The flame was passed on from each leg to the next and there was a great deal of support from the public watching the marathon. All participants completed each leg with a big smile on their faces and minus any injuries.

All the teams then finished the day with refreshments at Newforge Country Club, where Deputy Chairperson Ruth Smyth presented medals and certificates to all of the athletes. Everyone enjoyed a hot buffet at the presentation and shared tales of the run.

We are all looking forward to the Belfast Marathon in May 2014.

### **World Police & Fire Games Belfast 2013**

This year saw the WPFG visit Northern Ireland for the first time and the LETR saw an opportunity to offer a Torch Run as part of the event. This was supported by the WPFG and so David Smith, supported by Rab Gardiner and Noel Mullan, were asked to organise a Torch Run for the games.

The LETR for the WPFG happened between the 24 and 28 June 2013. This is the first time a Torch Run had been held for a WPFG and was extremely well supported by Special Olympics Ulster who provided athletes at every leg of the journey.



## More European Law Enforcement Torch Run News

### Jeremy Adams, Region IX Coordinator

This year Belgium will host the 2014 Special Olympics European Summer Games between 13<sup>th</sup> through 20<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

The Games will attract over 58 delegations from across Europe/Eurasia, and the Flame of Hope will be lit in traditional style in Greece in early September and then arrive in Belgium for a National Torch Run around Belgium, visiting the 8 major host towns ahead of the Opening Ceremony on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2014 in Brussels before the games commences in the beautiful Belgian City of Antwerp.

The Flame of Hope will be carried across the Country by a European Law Enforcement for Special Olympics Team, including Special Olympics athletes from Belgium.

The European LETR Council have been involved with the Games Organising Committee in preparation of the Torch Run, and the LETR Regional Coordinator, Jeremy Adams, is looking forward to a great Torch Run and fantastic games. The European Team will be made up of representatives from existing LETR

This will add a true International experience to the overall event and will allow new LETR representatives to sample the European Torch Run experience.

For the first time in their history, there will be a Law Enforcement Torch Run prior to the Special Olympics Switzerland Summer games in Bern, and Law Enforcement representatives from across the Country's five Regions will have a run in their own Regions from 24<sup>th</sup> May 2014 before coming together for the Opening Ceremony in Bern.

In September 2013, Regional LETR Coordinator Jeremy Adams and SOEE LETR Liaison, Nolwen Grasin, travelled to the beautiful Swizz City of Luzern, to meet representatives from Special Olympics Switzerland and the National Police Federation, who are coordinating the event.

Jeremy is delighted to welcome Switzerland to the European LETR family and was encouraged by the enthusiasm amongst the organisers.



programs and new and developing LETR programs, including Italy, Portugal, Iceland, Finland, Norway and Great Britain.



## Torch Run Success Through Planning How do you get there...and where is there?

*Pete Dunbar, Chief of Police (Ret.) — Pleasant Hill P.D., California*

Is your program ready to make the next step? Are you looking to increase outreach efforts to get more agencies involved? What about fundraising goals and getting your program to another level? Or would you be happy maintaining the success that your program has achieved? These are questions and issues that Torch Run programs face every year. You can be in the driver's seat by controlling the direction of your program by incorporating a strategic plan into your program.

At the International Conference in Orlando, over 200 people attended the "Alignment, Recruitment and Retention" breakout session. It is clear from the attendance, questions and attendee comments that Torch Run programs are looking to focus their efforts towards a number of different areas. Kurt Kendro from Hawaii and I did an overview of a planning process that is specially designed for Torch Run programs.

The model that we discussed is geared for programs that want to move forward at any pace. That means your program can grow by one new agency or 20, depending on what measures are designed and implemented. Program growth seems to be the number one goal but other issues included sustainability, reorganization, succession planning and marketing.

The issues discussed in the session seemed to have a common ingredient-CHANGE! Change may be necessary for a variety of factors. Those include a new director or liaison, loss of key leadership in the program, burnout and trying to do too much. Change is uncomfortable yet being uneasy is part of the change process. Understanding the concepts of change management, which are recognizing and discussing the fears of change, clear communication, involvement of program members and recognition of those who were part of the change is critical to the

success and sustainability of those changes.

No matter the role that you have in your program, it helps to look at your Torch Run program as a business. All of the outreach and fundraising efforts directly impact the success of your respective Special Olympics program. That means, the revenues and expenditures of your program are part of a larger business plan, to include a vision, goals and objectives. For example, by having a business model approach, you can determine those priorities that will achieve your goals and focus on them. It may be looking at those activities and events that may bring in revenue but only slightly more than the cost, so doing a cost vs. benefit process is crucial in your path to success.

The next step in the process is to identify a mission statement. Many programs have already developed a mission statement, reflecting the purpose of their program. It's important to have a mission statement to communicate the direction and purpose of the program to fellow torchrunners and to the public. It can also demonstrate to potential sponsors that your program has a direction and plan, important components to sponsors. Mission statements should be the product of a group or committee discussion but should be written by one person. The drafts can be reviewed and best statement selected by the executive committee of your state's program.

Once you are clear on your mission statement, gaining an understanding of where your program is today requires a frank and open process. Conducting an assessment of your program will give the state of your program today. A process to conduct the assessment is the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) model. Your program's executive

*(Continued on page 11)*

(Continued from page 10)

committee or other group(s) should list program strengths and weaknesses. The process should be a brainstorming session without discussion (discussion could prevent group members from speaking freely). Listing of opportunities such as new events/activities, outreach, sponsorship, etc., takes place next. Finally, a brainstorming of potential threats to the program's future, like change in leadership, loss of agency or sponsor participation, etc., completes the assessment process.

Take a look at the lists that have been generated. They can also be shared with a larger group and ask for additional comments. Getting a sense of the program's temperature will allow you to use the results as a springboard to the future. And while perceptions can be reality, looking at the lists should give the viewer a well-rounded look at the "highs" and "lows" of your program.

Now that you know where your program "is" at that point in time, where do you want to go? How do you get there in three to five years? Knowing what the assessment revealed, your program needs to decide what area(s) to focus on. Is it outreach within the state, generally or to specific area(s)? For example, it may be determined that to grow in a certain geographic area, additional members need to be added to your executive committee. You may wish to target specific areas, counties or agencies for outreach and growth efforts. Areas such as program growth through outreach, fundraising, events and activities are a common starting point. Area or issue identification is where you get into the details of the direction of your program.

Often, growth is tied to your program's organizational structure. Remember, it's a business and there should be clear roles and responsibilities at every level. Whether there is a structure with a director, regional, area, county and agency coordinators, each have specific roles that contribute to your program's success. Outreach efforts through this structure allow for flexibility to

provide greater assistance in some areas while others may "run themselves."

Once the decision has been made on what area(s) to focus on, it's time to decide what the goals should be. These goals come directly from the areas or issues. For example, if you identified growth as an area to focus on, the goal could be something like "To increase the number of agencies involved by 10%"; "To add two new agencies in each county." The more specific the goal, the more specific will be your strategies to achieve that goal. Growth is often found by examining agency outreach efforts, adding events or reorganizing the structure to aid in program development.

Look at the issues or areas with a mindset of writing the goals in the SMART format. They should be *specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic and time-based*. Measurable is often signified by a percentage or other number; action-oriented refers to doing something to achieve the goal; realistic refers to setting a goal that's achievable; goals should be accomplished within a set timeframe of one to three years. Any goal longer than three years may be too cumbersome and take resources away from achieving other goals.

The next step is to identify strategies or objectives to achieve each goal. These are those specific actions that have to be done to get to the goal. If your goal surrounds growth, the action steps to grow are the strategies. For example, if the goal is to increase agencies involved by 10%, the strategies could be: identify agencies for torch run involvement; identify who is going to make contact within the new agency and by when; how to gain involvement either by a mini-kickoff for new agencies, invitation to a torch run event, etc. The number of strategies to use is only restricted by the resources available to engage in them.

Finally, the plan needs to be reviewed on a regular basis. Making it a standing agenda item on the executive committee's agenda

(Continued on page 12)



(Continued from page 11)

will help drive it and identify any issues before they become larger. Once a goal is achieved, it's important to celebrate that success and recognize those involved. Then the program can focus on remaining goals or developing new ones as necessary.

Resource allocation, cost vs. benefit analysis and evaluation, are important components for successful businesses. By adding a strategic plan to your program, it can be on a course of sustainability, growth and satisfaction for all of those in your program.



### ***Laissez Les Bon Temps Rouler at the 2014 International Law Enforcement Torch Run® Conference***

Special Olympics Louisiana is proud to host the 2014 Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) International Conference. Join us in celebrating the 33<sup>rd</sup> year of Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics. Approximately 1,500 law enforcement officers from all corners of the globe will join together in Louisiana to experience one of the world's most fascinating cities.

The 2014 Conference will be held, September 9 – 13 at the beautiful Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel, located in the heart of downtown New Orleans on the banks of the Mississippi River. Only four blocks away from the city's colorful French Quarter and across the street from Harrah's Casino, guests will have the opportunity to really explore the Carnival city of Louisiana. New Orleans is hailed as the birthplace of jazz and boasts a mix of African, European and Creole traditions. Absorb the historic French Quarter, the heart of New Orleans, within walking distance from the hotel or explore the city of New Orleans with a streetcar ride. Observe the city's colorful architecture, feast on a bowl of seafood gumbo or boiled crawfish, and enjoy a late night of jazz music. Experience all of this while networking, sharing and learning from other Torch Run programs and law enforcement officers from around the world.

New Orleans is one of America's most culturally and historically-rich destinations. Louisiana's LETR Director, Chief Carl Dabadie of the Baton Rouge Police Department, is ready for you to come and "Laissez les bon temps rouler!" (Let the good times roll!) The conference is loaded with information, sessions and networking opportunities to enhance your Torch Run program.

With attendees expected from various countries, the LETR International Conference encourages all attendees to mingle, share and learn from one another to improve their local Torch Run programs. The Conference will build public awareness and continue to change the lives of people with intellectual disabilities through Special Olympics.

Check out the 2014 International Law Enforcement Torch Run Conference website for up-to-date information at [www.lettr.org](http://www.lettr.org).

## Law Enforcement Torch Run® Final Leg for the Special Olympics 2013 Asia Pacific Games

*Scott Whyte, LETR New South Wales*



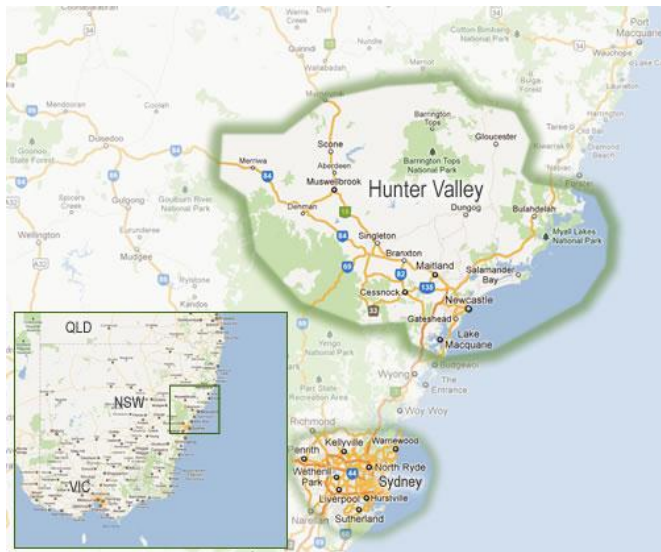
SPECIAL OLYMPICS 2013 ASIA PACIFIC GAMES

# NEWCASTLE

On Sunday, 1 December 2013, two and a half thousand Special Olympics athletes from twenty-nine countries in the Asia Pacific Region walked onto the field at Hunter Stadium in Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia to participate in the Opening Ceremony of the inaugural Special Olympics Asia Pacific Games. The Special Olympics athletes came from as far afield as Nepal and Mongolia in the north-west; China, Korea and Japan in the north-east and Samoa and Tonga in the south-east.

The city of Newcastle was awarded the rights to hold the Games in 2012. Newcastle is located on the east coast of New South Wales, about 2 hours drive north of Sydney. The area surrounding Newcastle is known as the Hunter Region or Hunter Valley, named after Vice Admiral John Hunter, the second Governor of the colony of New South Wales (1795 – 1800).

The Hunter Valley is best known for its wineries, with over 120 vineyards operating in the area, but coal mining, electricity generation and dairy farming are all conducted in the region.



Map of New South Wales showing the Hunter Region

The Law Enforcement Torch Run® Final Leg kicked off on Tuesday, 26 November with a spectacular Torch Run across the world famous Sydney Harbour Bridge (yes, that is how we spell it) before ending on the forecourt of the Sydney Opera House. This event, with almost 100 New South Wales Police officers participating, was designed to be a salute to the NSW based members of Team Australia. Two very keen Torch Runners that day were LETR Executive Council Chair, Mike Peretti and Executive Council member Bill Buford who travelled to Australia to observe and participate in the event.



LETR Executive Council Chair, Mike Peretti presenting a commemorative Final Leg Torch to NSW Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione at the Torch Run ceremony held at the Sydney Opera House on 26 November 2013.

Late on the following afternoon, fifty members of the Final Leg team assembled at the team hotel in the Hunter Valley for the pre-event briefing. The team included three Special Olympics athletes, Jacqui Spencer

*(Continued on page 14)*



(Continued from page 13)

and Wayne Wright from Tasmania and Shaun Sellars from South Australia, twenty NSW Police officers from the Newcastle and surrounding areas, and nine Police officers from Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia and New Zealand.

The local Police Officers who took part in the Final Leg were selected by their Commands and were rostered for duty on each day of the event. Very few of them had any prior knowledge of LETR or Special Olympics. That was about to change.



SO Athlete Mitchell Carlan conducts the Royal Australian Navy Band in Cessnock.

The response from the communities visited was outstanding with one of the highlights being in the city of Cessnock where 70 members of the SO Team Australia Swim Team joined in the Torch Run. Not to mention SO athlete Mitchell Carlan who decided to take over as Conductor of the Royal Australian Navy Band for a rendition of Australia's favorite folk song 'Waltzing Matilda'.

The Opening Ceremony was a four-hour spectacular with over 25,000 spectators filling the stadium. Entertainment for the night included many of Australia's best known musical talent,



The Final Leg team makes its way through the streets of Nelson Bay.

For the next four days, the Final Leg team conducted nine Torch Run events in towns and cities across the wide expanse of the Hunter Region. This involved a total distance travelled of almost 1100 kilometres (650 miles).



The Flame of Hope Lighting Ceremony

(Continued on page 15)



(Continued from page 14)

culminating in the arrival of the Flame of Hope and the lighting of the Games Cauldron.

The Lighting Ceremony involved 30 members of the Final Leg team, 30 Special Olympics athletes and 8 senior NSW Police officers including Commissioner Andrew Scipione who passed the Flame of Hope onto Australian Special Olympics athlete Geoffrey Kirby to light the Games Cauldron.

The impact that the Final Leg had on the Torch Runners and Special Olympics athletes who took part in the event can best be summed up in the words of one of the local Police Officers who wrote in an email:

*"I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for the opportunity to participate in such an amazing experience. Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would get so much from an event such as this. To see the joy it brought to the faces of the athletes that participated in each leg of the event as well as how nothing appeared to be a problem for them, was both rewarding and humbling."*

So in summary – a job well done.

The Final Leg was made possible through the support of the SO Asia Pacific Games Organising Committee who funded the travel, accommodation, meals, torches and running shirts for the Final Leg team.



Special Olympics athlete Geoffrey Kirby lights the Games Cauldron at the SO Asia Pacific Games Opening Ceremony.

Another major contributor to the success of the event was the New South Wales Police Force. Commissioner Andrew Scipione, who is the Patron of LETR New South Wales generously approved the use of Police buses to transport the Torch Runners, Highway Patrol vehicles to provide traffic support for every event and the allocation of 90 Police Officers on duty to take part in the Sydney Harbour Bridge Torch Run and 20 Police Officers from the Newcastle area for five days on duty to be part of the Final Leg team. The event simply could not have been achieved without that level of support.

I wonder where the next Special Olympics Asia Pacific Games will be held.

# 2013 IACP Photo Contest



## Category A — Group

1ST PLACE



**March of Hope**  
**Special Olympics North Carolina**  
 Photo by: Dawn Myers

2ND PLACE



**Bring on the Games**  
**LETR NSW, Australia**  
 Photo by: Peter Muhlbock

3RD PLACE



**Eye in the Sky**  
**Ontario LETR**



# 2013 IACP Photo Contest

## Category B — Spirit



**1ST PLACE**

Summer Game Fun—Dance, Dance, Dance  
Special Olympics Oklahoma  
Photo by: Rachel House

**2ND PLACE**



That's What I'm Talkin' About!  
Special Olympics Kentucky  
Photo by: Bob Bunting

**3RD PLACE**



Enjoyment  
Special Olympics Gibraltar  
Photo by: Brian Reyes



# 2013 IACP Photo Contest

## Category C — Police Officer and Athlete

**2ND PLACE**



**A Special Relationship**  
LETR NSW, Australia  
Photo by: Peter Muhlbock

**1ST PLACE**



**Hope**  
Special Olympics North Carolina  
Photo by: Jay Smith

**3RD PLACE**



**Lighting the Flame — Summer Games 2013**  
Special Olympics Colorado  
Photo by: Jeff Stoddart

# 2013 IACP Photo Contest

## Category D — Guardians of the Flame

### 2ND PLACE



Lighting the Way  
Special Olympics Illinois  
Photo by: Del Mecum

### 1ST PLACE



Bringing the Torch In  
Special Olympics Southern California  
Photo by: Chris Blondon

### 3RD PLACE



Bringing the Torch In  
Special Olympics Southern California  
Photo by: Jim Cayer



# 2013 IACP Photo Contest

## Category E — Professional

1ST PLACE



The Warmth of Officer and Athlete  
LETR Final Leg  
Photo by: Andrea Kramer

2ND PLACE



Nothing but SMILES  
LETR Final Leg  
Photo by: David Kramer

Look to the Torch  
LETR Final Leg  
Photo by: David Kramer

3RD PLACE





## Missouri Law Enforcement Torch Run Kickoff & Awards Brunch

### Benay Hicks, Special Olympics Missouri

The Missouri Law Enforcement Torch Run® began its 29<sup>th</sup> fundraising year at the Special Olympics Missouri LETR Awards Brunch & Kickoff in December, but not before acknowledging the milestones that were reached in 2013. Gathered together at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Jefferson City, nearly 200 of the state's finest law enforcement, athletes and SOMO staff celebrated surpassing the \$20 million mark of total funds raised since the Missouri LETR began in 1986. This accomplishment only just scratches the surface of the passion behind the men and women in uniform who commit to the mission of Special Olympics Missouri every year, and who truly make a difference in the lives of the athletes.

Several SOMO LETR officers have personal connections with athletes, including Captain John Wheeler of the Cole County Sheriff's Department, whose daughter is an athlete in Missouri. As he spoke at the LETR kickoff, Captain Wheeler told how his daughter's first gold medal was awarded to her by a law enforcement officer and how it made both of them extremely proud. "She always calls anyone in uniform my friend," he said fondly,

"it doesn't matter what uniform it is, he's my friend." He also highlighted the value of the coaches and volunteers who helped his daughter, as well as the support he has experienced from other families involved with SOMO. He concluded by commissioning his fellow law enforcement to never think of SOMO events just as Special Olympics events: "they are so much more to a lot of people."



**Officer Mark Wiesemann, recipient of the Letz Award For unsung heroes, carries the Torch out of the ceremony alongside an athlete.**



**Captain John Wheeler speaks about his daughter's Involvement with SOMO.**

The kickoff and awards ceremony also celebrated the incredible achievements of individuals and specific agencies throughout Missouri, awarding top fundraisers and those who went above and beyond in 2013. This includes the Letz Award, SOMO's highest award for LETR unsung heroic efforts. This year's recipient was Officer Mark Wiesemann with the Lee's Summit Police Department. His hard work over the past 11 years in building the Kansas City plunge and

*(Continued on page 22)*

(Continued from page 21)

helping to raise nearly \$500,000 is inspirational. He will carry the torch into the opening ceremonies at the Summer State Games.

Another milestone celebrated at the 2013 awards brunch was the greatness of Chief Randy Boehm, longtime LETR Committee



Chief Randy Boehm shakes CEO Mark Musso's hand after officially completing a 10-year term as Missouri's LETR Committee Chair.

Chair for the state of Missouri. After an amazing ten-year run, Chief Boehm has decided to pass the torch; Chief Jim Moran with the St. Louis University PD has now been appointed and is looking forward to continuing the excellent tradition of Missouri's LETR.

The kickoff event also had several educational & inspirational sessions. Missouri law enforcement heard a message of hope from Keith Bentz with Crossroads Correctional Center, learned about a unique relationship called Baron's Buddies taking place in Oklahoma, and also received P.O.S.T. Autism training from Aaron Likens, who taught them about individuals on the Spectrum. Officers became more aware of the difference they can make and are prepared to have a successful 2014 Torch Run.

A final highlight of this year's LETR kickoff was the second annual Tip-A-Cop. Officers from all over Missouri got to know each

other and the town of Jefferson City by conducting a Tip-A-Cop fundraiser at ten restaurants throughout Jefferson City. A total of 48 officers worked for "tips" (donations) and raised a total of \$6,100.49 in only a few hours. Not only did the officers do an excellent job fundraising, it provided a unique opportunity for them to experience a Tip-A-Cop event and learn or review how to make it an effective fundraiser in their respective communities.

All in all, the Law Enforcement Torch Run was fully celebrated during the December kickoff event and was capped off by the unveiling of the new Torch Run t-shirts, modeled by Special Olympics Missouri athletes who were present at the ceremony. The well-designed shirts feature the top law enforcement agencies, as well as the Shop 'n Save logo. Shop 'n Save has been the Official Sponsor of Missouri's LETR since 2000 and was given a special plaque in honor of their efforts. With another awards ceremony and kickoff under their belts, the law enforcement officers of Missouri are excited to take their fundraising totals soaring past \$20 million in 2014 and continue to make a difference for Special Olympics Missouri in the years to come.



Correctional Officers enjoy conversation with diners at a local restaurant during the annual LETR Kickoff Tip-A-Cop.



## Law Enforcement Torch Run Portugal

### Manuel Pedro Dos Santos Gonçalves, National Police

I begin this text with some questions---What if Richard LaMunyon didn't have the initiative that we all know? Would it be possible to see what I saw during the International Conference that took place in Orlando, Florida!? The spirit, the feeling of mission accomplished that everyone was showing gave us the perfect idea on what the Law Enforcement Torch Run® is all about...

What if law enforcement didn't adhere the way they do? Could Special Olympics all around the world reach so many people and give so many moments of happiness, like those we proudly saw all during this International Conference?

It was also possible to observe the energy that law enforcement men and women give to activities related to LETR.



On what concerns LETR Portugal, we need to go back to February 1993 when Gibraltar invited Portugal National Police (Policia de Segurança Pública) to be a part of this movement. Embraced as a national cause, it was established that, considering the legal framework, it was only possible to give logistic and human resources support to Special Olympics Portugal activity.

The highlight of this partnership is the organization, in 2009, of Special Olympics Seven-a-Side European Football with the participation of 21 Countries.

Looking forward, we hope to improve our collaboration with SO Portugal and give a

boost to LETR activities in our country, beginning with discussing and presenting a specific logo, in Portuguese, so that our intervention can be easily identified. In order to achieve this purpose, we are committed to designing, for future presentation and approval, a logo that can easily capture and show the LETR spirit and values.



As Richard LaMunyon said during Orlando International Conference, it is impossible to predict the future and say where LETR will go. But we will do everything in our reach to give our athletes the chance to show what they are capable of doing.

In order to achieve these goals we are discussing new ideas and trying to establish a new and different structure that enables LETR Portugal to do more and better.





## Volunteering Together to Champion Acceptance and Inclusion

### Kirsten Seckler, Special Olympics

In November, at the International Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Conference, a refreshed visual identity and brand management system was unveiled for LETR. This work reflects three years of collaboration to more closely align LETR with Special Olympics, recognize the evolution of the LETR brand, and create a system of tools and resources.



"Volunteering together to champion acceptance and inclusion" is the heart of the LETR brand. Every day around the world, thousands of law enforcement officers are going above and beyond the call of duty to support Special Olympics and the athletes in their local communities.

The new brand management system is aligned with the overall refreshed branding of Special Olympics and celebrates the partnership between law enforcement and Special Olympics.

In August 2010, just after the Special Olympics Global Congress, the LETR Executive Council met in Washington DC. It was at that meeting that they began to discuss how a review of the LETR brand was needed. Roy Forrest, Chair of the Marketing & Development Committee at the time, volunteered to lead the effort.

"I cannot thank Roy enough for leading this charge," shared Mike Peretti, Chair of the LETR Executive Council. "We never expected the scope of this undertaking and Roy, we are forever grateful."

The work happened in four phases and included input from hundreds of stakeholders in the form of interviews, focus groups, discussions, and surveys.

"We listened to the challenges; we listened to successes," said Roy Forrest. "We identified considerations that would help us accomplish a few goals, which included making sure that LETR was more aligned with the Special Olympics brand. We want the public to not have to think twice – Special Olympics is our charity of choice."

Thanks to the help of Ciaran O'Gaora of Zero-G, a brand consultant who has been supporting Special Olympics' brand work. He reviewed the LETR visual identity and created a brand management system that will hopefully provide everyone the tools to continue to grow LETR and Special Olympics.

The guidelines and tools can be [accessed here](#) and at [www.lettr.org](http://www.lettr.org). Please make sure these guidelines are distributed among your staff and outside graphics vendors.

If you have any questions, please contact [brand@specialolympics.org](mailto:brand@specialolympics.org).

## BC LETR Brings Passion, Expertise to SO Fitness Program

### Eliot James, Special Olympics British Columbia

It's a fitness program unique to Special Olympics British Columbia – and an extraordinary group of Special Olympics BC supporters has gotten wholeheartedly behind it. Club Fit, a program designed to help athletes improve their overall health and fitness outside of regular sports training, is benefitting from the passion and expertise of several law enforcement agencies involved in the BC Law Enforcement Torch Run®.

The LETR has had a strong presence in British Columbia for more than 20 years, with numerous members of law enforcement agencies staging the annual Torch Run, drafting athletes to Special Olympics Games, and leading other fundraising events year-round. Two years ago, members of the Vancouver, Delta, and Abbotsford police departments, and the Surrey Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Emergency Response Team stepped up to also help run Club Fit programs in their local communities.

Superintendent Dean Robinson, a member of the BC LETR Executive Council, says the program has become wildly popular with the Vancouver Police Department.

"We are treated like rock stars by our athletes," Supt. Robinson says. "They are full of high-fives, hugs, and beaming smiles as they thank us for our efforts and for making Club Fit a special time."

Sometimes even more rewarding is the response of family members and caregivers, Supt. Robinson says. They rave about how much the athletes love attending Club Fit and spending time with the Vancouver PD volunteers every week, and how the athletes are improving on a physical level and often socially as well.

Club Fit is designed for athletes of varying skill levels ages 14 and up. The program is part of the Special Olympics long-term athlete development model that aims to help athletes improve their health for their whole lives.

The weekly program emphasizes strength training and cardio, helping athletes improve their performance in their other sports and their overall health and fitness. Facilitators are also encouraged to include a component on life skills and nutrition. As Club Fit coaches, the LETR volunteers work closely with Club Fit athletes to foster relationships and build self-empowerment, along with physical training.

"We see them gaining confidence, getting stronger, and developing skills in a variety of activities that allow us to



**A Vancouver Police Department volunteer and Special Olympics BC – Vancouver athletes were all smiles in a recent Club Fit practice.**

*(Continued on page 26)*

*(Continued from page 25)*

measure progress on the physical front,” Supt. Robinson says. “We also see many of them opening up and becoming more outgoing and inclusive of others, such as me in a uniform and new volunteers as they come on board.”

The VPD has about 40 volunteers giving their time to the SOBC – Vancouver Club Fit program, including sworn officers, civilian members, department volunteers, and even family members of department staff. Supt. Robinson refers to this group as the “VPD family,” which has grown to include the Special Olympics athletes themselves.

Special Olympics athlete Nellie-Jo Kurta competes in numerous sports including 10-pin bowling, golf, powerlifting, and softball, and she joined Club Fit to improve her cardio for Regional Qualifiers.

“It helped me get healthier,” Kurta says. “I’m now starting to watch what I eat.” Kurta has also had an enriching experience training with members of the VPD.

“It’s awesome,” Kurta says. “You get to learn things about them, like how tough their job is. And they love working with you and anyone with special needs.” She says that some VPD volunteers even take time out to watch her and other athletes participate in their other sport programs. “We’ve become like friends with a couple who volunteer,” Kurta says.

Along with heart, many law enforcement volunteers bring an extensive fitness background to Club Fit, including coaching and professional sports experience. Some, like Constable Lisa Coupar of the Delta Police Department, are personal trainers.

Cst. Coupar and others at the DPD, including Deputy Chief Constable Lyle Beaudoin who sits on the BC LETR Executive, are keen supporters of Club Fit in their local community. Cst. Coupar enthusiastically jumped into the program, initially training one athlete at the police

station before expanding into a program for multiple athletes using donated space at a gym where she works.

For many busy law enforcement volunteers, working with Club Fit provides a fun way to be involved directly with Special Olympics athletes on a regular basis. “Club Fit has allowed them to be involved – giving back, relationship building, and, more importantly, understanding what Special Olympics is all about,” says longtime BC LETR volunteer Kelly Pater, Abbotsford Police Department Community Policing Coordinator.



## REGIONAL COORDINATORS

**Special Olympics Appointee****Glenn MacDonnell**

Special Olympics Ontario

**Special Olympics Appointee****Peter Wheeler**

Special Olympics International

**Special Olympics At-Large****Mark Musso**

Special Olympics Missouri

**Special Olympics At-Large****Adrian DeWendt (Vice-Chair)**

Special Olympics Oklahoma

**Special Olympics At-Large****Rich Fernandez**

Special Olympics Southern California

**SOI Executive Director of LETR****Michael Teem**

Special Olympics, Inc.

**Chairman Emeritus****Richard LaMunyon (Ret.)**

Kansas, LETR

**IACP Appointee****Russ Laine**

Illinois, LETR

**IACP Appointee****Walter McNeil**

Florida, LETR

**Council Appointee****Steve Nigrelli**

New York, LETR

**Council Appointee****Luis A Rosa**

Connecticut, LETR

**Law Enforcement At-Large****Antonio Williams**

Hawaii, LETR

**Law Enforcement At-Large****Kurt Kendro**

Hawaii, LETR

**Law Enforcement At-Large****Mike Peretti (chair)**

Northern California, LETR

**Special Olympics Athlete Appointee****Sam Tam**

Special Olympics Hong Kong

**Region I**

CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT

**Joe Carlone**

Connecticut, LETR

**Region II**

DC, DE, MD, PA, NJ, NY, VA, WV

**John Newnan**

Maryland, LETR

**Region III**

AL, FL, GA, MS, NC, SC, TN

**Mike Anderson**

Florida, LETR

**Region IV**

IL, IN, KY, MI, OH

**Jim Reno**

Indiana, LETR

**Region V**

IA, MN, NE, ND, SD, WI

**Richard Sheldon**

Minnesota, LETR

**Region VI**

AR, KS, LA, MO, OK, TX

**Mark Wollmershauser**

Oklahoma, LETR

**Region VII**

AZ, N. CA, S. CA, CO, HI, NV, NM, UT,

GUAM

**Roberta Abner**

Southern California, LETR

**Region VIII**

AK, ID, MT, OR, WA, WY

**Ron Casalenda**

Wyoming, LETR

**Region IX****Western Europe****Jeremy Adams**

Ireland, LETR

**Region X****Eastern Europe/Eurasia****Jacek Hachulski**

Poland, LETR

**Region XI****Canada**

(AB, BS, MB, NB, NF, NWT, NS, ON, PEI, PQ, SK, YK)

**Paul Manuel****Region XII****East Asia****Patrick Chan**

Special Olympics Hong Kong

**Region XIII****Caribbean**

( St. Vincent, Jamaica, Barbados, Dominica, Antigua, St. Lucia, St. Kitts &amp; Nevis, Puerto Rico, Grand Cayman, Bahamas, Grenada, Trinidad &amp; Tobago, Guadeloupe, Martinique, US Virgin Islands, St. Maarten, Bonaire, Curacao, Aruba, Haiti, Belize, Guyana, Montserrat, Suriname)

**Bill Buford (Ret.)**

Arkansas, LETR

**Region XIV****Oceania****Scott Whyte**

Australia, LETR

**Region XV****Latin America****Vladimir Caceres**

Policia Nacional Civil de El Salvador

El Salvador, LETR