

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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PITTSBURG OFFICERS RUN THE STREETS Carry Torch to Support Special Olympics Athletes

Pittsburg , Kan.- It is expected that 1,150 officers from over 97 agencies will carry the “Flame of Hope” throughout 52 counties in Kansas as they travel to the annual Special Olympics Summer Games held in Wichita. The Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) is a series of statewide runs which will travel approximately 1,276 miles throughout the state. Law Enforcement Officers, along with Dustin Gunter, member of Royal Valley Panthers Special Olympics in Hoyt, Most Inspirational Athlete of 2015, will light the cauldron to officially open the Summer Games in front of over 3,000 athletes, coaches and fans of Special Olympics Kansas on June 3rd.

Locally, the Pittsburg leg of the torch run route will be Wednesday April 20th. The route and times:

- 0830 Hours Start at City Hall with Mayor declaring Law Enforcement Torch Run Day
- North on Pine St to 4th Street
- East on 4th to Broadway St
- South on Broadway to Quincy St
- East on Quincy St to Joplin St
- South on Joplin onto the Pittsburg State campus
- Run half lap on track with an athlete to light the torch
- 0930 Hours Declare Spring Southeast Regional Games Open

The public is encouraged to step outside their business or home and encourage the officers as they run. Celebrating their 35th anniversary, the Law Enforcement Torch Run began in Wichita, Kansas in 1981 with six runners and has grown to an international program involving thousands of Law Enforcement personnel, raising millions of dollars annually to benefit Special Olympics programs in the United States and abroad.

The Torch Run is the largest grassroots fundraiser and public awareness vehicle for Special Olympics Kansas. Officers volunteer hundreds of hours each year and in 2015 raised \$543,582.96 in support of Special Olympics Kansas programs. This remarkable feat was accomplished by holding events and fundraising through the torch run, special event fundraisers (i.e. Polar Plunge, Truck Convoy), sponsorships and donations.

Gary Steed, Executive Director of the Kansas Commission of Peace Officers’ Standard and Training, is the Honorary Chair of the LETR. Kalmar Industries and Amerigroup Foundation are Guardians of the Flame Sponsors. You can support the Torch Run by making a secure donation online at www.kansastorchrun.org or contact Luke Schulte at 620-408-4450. ###

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