



MEDIA RELEASE

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Flame of Hope to travel through Kansas City Metro Kansas Law Enforcement on 1,600 mile journey for Special Olympics Kansas

MISSION, Kan. – Law enforcement officers from Johnson and Wyandotte Counties will carry the Special Olympics Kansas Flame of Hope May 29, beginning at 8:30 a.m. from Main Event Entertainment in Olathe to the Kansas City Kansas Fraternal Order of Police Hall.

The run is part of a 1,600 mile journey for the Flame of Hope across Kansas as part of the ceremonial 2018 Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) for Special Olympics Kansas.

“Without the support and dedication of law enforcement officers throughout the state we could not do what we do for our athletes,” Special Olympics Kansas spokesperson Heather Waters said. “Law enforcement officers band together with their communities to change attitudes and support Special Olympics athletes with intellectual disabilities. They truly transform lives and we are grateful for all they do.”

Torch Runs are held in Kansas leading up to the annual summer games in Wichita. Law enforcement officers raise money for Special Olympics Kansas throughout the year by participating in these runs as well as events like Polar Plunges, Tip-A-Cop and Cover the Cruiser.

In 2017 more than 1,300 officers took part in more than 30 runs throughout the state. In total, Kansas LETR participants raised more than \$550,000 for Special Olympics Kansas in 2017.

“Year after year we have the support of men and women of law enforcement who elevate Special Olympics Kansas within their communities,” Special Olympics President/CEO John Lair said. “Every year officers from local agencies, Sheriff Offices, campus police and the Highway Patrol give so much to this event and expect nothing in return.”

At the conclusion of this leg of the torch run the torch will travel to Leavenworth, Kansas, for the next leg on June 1.

“For more than 30 years, the Law Enforcement Torch Run has been an integral part of the Special Olympics Movement,” Lair said. “What started right here in Kansas has become an annual tradition all around the world.”

RUN ROUTE (subject to change)

8:30 a.m. – Runners gather at Main Event Entertainment, 11950 N Kansas City Rd, Olathe, KS 66061.
8:45 a.m. – Opening Ceremony
9:15 a.m. – Torch run begins, west on Bass Pro Dr, then north on Renner Blvd
9:20 a.m. – East on 119th Street
10:40 a.m. – North on Tomahawk Creek Parkway
10:45 a.m. – Lunch and ceremony at Leawood Criminal Justice Center
11:15 a.m. – Start Torch Run again North on Tomahawk Creek Parkway (turns into Mission Rd)
Noon - Stop at Johnny’s (83 St/Mission Rd)
12:15 p.m. - Resume run – West on 83rd Street to South on Somerset
12:35 p.m. - South on Somerset to Nall
12:45 p.m. - West on 95th
1:30 p.m. - Stop at Sam’s Club parking lot
1:55 p.m. – North on Quivira.
2:20 p.m. – East on Shawnee Mission Parkway to Carter and onto Merriam Dr
2:50 p.m. – North on Merriam Dr and East on Johnson Dr then North on Slater
3:00 p.m. – Stop at Merriam Towne Center
3:20 p.m. – Load in vans and head to KCK / Schlitterbahn Water Park. Meet Wyandotte County Runners.
3:50 p.m. – Run out of Schlitterbahn, East on State Ave.
4:10 p.m. – North on 78 St
4:30 p.m. – Ending ceremony at KCK PD FOP Hall (7844 Leavenworth Rd)

MEDIA INQUIRIES

Special Olympics Kansas LETR liaison: Luke Schulte schultel@kssso.org

For more information about the run in Johnson and Wyandotte Counties contact Prairie Village Police Sgt. Adam Taylor at 913-484-7410 or visit <http://kssso.org/torch-run-letr/torch-runs/>.

SPONSORS

Sponsors of the Law Enforcement Torch Run include Amerigroup, Kalmar, Medicalodges, Lee Jeans, Southwest Dairy Farmers, Wichita Community Foundation, Wichita Railway Services LLC and Union Pacific.

ABOUT LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN (LETR)

The Law Enforcement Torch Run began in 1981 with founder Wichita Police Chief Richard LaMunyon and five law enforcement officers carrying the torch for the Special Olympics Kansas Summer Games in Wichita. The LETR has since evolved to a volunteer partnership with Special

Olympics to champion acceptance and inclusion. It has become a worldwide community of law enforcement officers rallying to support Special Olympics, the impetus for millions of new friendships around the world, and a series of events including Torch Runs, Polar Plunge fundraisers, and Tip-A-Cop® events. The LETR is the largest grassroots fundraiser for Special Olympics with more than 100,000 law enforcement participants around the world. Visit LETR.org for more information.

ABOUT SPECIAL OLYMPICS KANSAS (SOKS)

Special Olympics Kansas is dedicated to empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit, productive and respected members of society through sports competitions, health and nutrition programs and leadership development.

SOKS is a non-profit organization supported almost entirely by corporate and individual gifts, and events. The generosity of Kansas organizations, individuals and statewide businesses enable the program to continue.

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