

**Special  
Olympics**  
Alberta



LAW ENFORCEMENT  
**TORCH RUN**  
FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
ALBERTA

## Alberta Guardian

### Upcoming Events

We are winding down the year and it is on track to be the most successful one yet for fundraising efforts. Thank you for your continued support of our events and helping Special Olympic Athletes realize their dreams of taking part in sports. We need you! If you would like to help out at any of the below events please contact the event lead.

Event	Location	Date	Event Lead
Cops, Pops & Pizza	Lacombe	October 14	Jeff Hewitt <a href="mailto:JHewitt@lacombe.ca">JHewitt@lacombe.ca</a>
Cops, Pops & Pizza	Lethbridge	November	Mat Champagne <a href="mailto:mchampag@taber.ca">mchampag@taber.ca</a>
Polar Plunge	Edmonton	January 28 <sup>th</sup>	Amanda Trenchard <a href="mailto:Amanda.Trenchard@edmontonpolice.ca">Amanda.Trenchard@edmontonpolice.ca</a>
Polar Plunge	Red Deer	February 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Kevin Duval <a href="mailto:duval@albertaanimalservices.ca">duval@albertaanimalservices.ca</a>
Polar Plunge	Lethbridge	February 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Mat Champagne <a href="mailto:mchampag@taber.ca">mchampag@taber.ca</a>
Polar Plunge	Calgary	February 24 <sup>th</sup>	Stephen Scott <a href="mailto:stephen.scott@gov.ab.ca">stephen.scott@gov.ab.ca</a>
Polar Plunge	Medicine Hat	March 10 <sup>th</sup>	Aaron Brevik <a href="mailto:Aaron.Brevik@mhps.ca">Aaron.Brevik@mhps.ca</a>

### 2018 Alberta LETR Kick Off Conference

Are you interested in learning more about Law Enforcement Torch Run? Or are you already involved but want to meet other members from across the province to increase your involvement or knowledge? Why not come to our Annual Conference being held at the Grey Eagle Resort & Casino in Calgary on November 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>. We still have free accommodations on Friday evening for the first 6 registrants from each region (outside the host region) so don't wait. Register at <http://albertatorchrun.ca/wordpress/>

## Provincial Director Opportunity

We are still accepting applications for the Provincial Director.

Please follow the link below to find out more information and submit an application:

[http://albertatorchrun.ca/wordpress/?page\\_id=939](http://albertatorchrun.ca/wordpress/?page_id=939)

**Applications will be accepted until October 13, 2017.**

## 2017 Lethbridge Black Tie Gala

On September 15<sup>th</sup>, Lethbridge hosted our 1<sup>st</sup> Black Tie Gala and it was a tremendous success raising over \$20,000! Thanks to everyone that helped organized this magnificent evening.



## 2017 LETR International Conference

On September 20<sup>th</sup> Alberta sent a delegation of representatives to Nashville to take part in the 2017 LETR International Conference. We participated in informative sessions, ran in the Final Leg run and even took 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the Bus Pull. In 2016 LETR globally raised over \$56,000,000, and thanks to all of you Alberta brought home the Sapphire Award for fundraising over \$430,000.



## 2017 World Winter Games in Austria



# It's Not About the Run!

By Katrina O'Reilly

The Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) is the largest grassroots fund raiser and public awareness vehicle in the world for Special Olympics. In 2015, the international program raised more than \$55,030,364 USD to support Special Olympics programs. In Alberta, Law Enforcement Torch Run has been active since the late 1980s. In recent years, it has been successful in raising more than \$500,000 annually for Special Olympics. In Alberta, LETR is the charity of choice for the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police.

Over the past 35 years, the Law Enforcement Torch Run has evolved from a symbolic awareness run to a very significant and annual fundraising effort conducted by the law enforcement community. From Torch Run stuffed polar bears and K9 stuffy sales, to a wide variety and multitude of special events, such as Free our Finest, Polar Plunges®, Harley raffles, the World's Largest Truck Convoy® and Cops and Crepes fundraisers. The LETR raises funds so that more Special Olympics athletes can benefit in many areas of their lives through athletic training and competition.

More than 97,000 law enforcement members in all 50 U.S. States, 12 Canadian Provinces/Territories, and 43 other countries contribute to LETR efforts annually as **Guardians of the Flame**. This ensures the delivery of the Special Olympics Flame of Hope™ to the Opening Ceremonies of local Special Olympics competitions, state/provincial Games, and National/Regional Games.

Since 1987, law enforcement officers from around the world have gathered to carry the Flame of Hope in a Law Enforcement Torch Run Final Leg in conjunction with Special Olympics World Summer and World Winter Games.

In March 2017, 84 Police Officers, from 24 countries and 10 Special Olympic Athletes from around the world were chosen to take part in the Final Leg Torch Run for the Special Olympics World Winter Games in Austria. I was fortunate to have been chosen to be one of the Final Leg Torch Run team members, one of 8 Canadians and the only Albertan. I was honored to represent ALETR and Canada! I can certainly say that this was an unbelievable and moving life experience.

Our Final Leg team ran carrying the Flame of Hope through 49 Austrian cities in 10 days spreading awareness and excitement for the World Winter Games. Celebrating differences in ability and promoting a more inclusive world for all.

Our Final Leg team put on 2900 collective miles, ultimately making our way to the opening ceremonies of the World Winter Games in Schladming, Austria. The ceremonies were truly



amazing! I was so very proud to be a Canadian cheering very loudly for our 148 Canadian Special Olympic athletes competing in various winter events.

My involvement and passion for Special Olympics has grown tremendously over the years. Working with these incredible people and athletes both as an LETR volunteer as well as a novice softball coach has truly made me a better person, parent and police officer. Being an LETR volunteer has made me realize that there are many important things in this world and by working together and seeing past our discrepancies, we can come together to accomplish great things - be it a softball throw or resolving differences.

As a Special Olympics coach, I have come to see the impact of the funds raised by Alberta LETR; for athlete travel, development and equipment. I do feel that the true impact from LETR fundraising and events comes from the awareness and unification that has been accomplished.

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I know that being a police officer is more than a career - it is a life choice and calling for many of us. I furthermore recognize that volunteering with LETR and Special Olympics is also a calling for me and many others! It has truly transformed me and my family by inspiring us all to have open minds, to accept and include people with intellectual disabilities, to celebrate differences among all people, and that everyone has a fundamental right to dignity, acceptance and respect. I am tremendously proud to be a part of a large number of law enforcement officers from all over the world that share in this belief. It is this belief that makes this Final Leg and the Torch Run such an important event for us, and so much more than just a run.

**I want to very much thank the Calgary Police Association, Inspector Ryan Ayliff and many CPS colleagues and friends for supporting me in this amazing journey.** For the athletes and officers who were with me on the final leg and those that come out to volunteer at our local LETR events, I thank you for sharing in this experience. I'm sure you will agree that our LETR experience is a true story of success, love, respect and commitment between law enforcement officers and Special Olympics athletes.

For more information on how to get involved, please contact LETR Manager Lorrie Sitler [lsitler@specialolympics.ab.ca](mailto:lsitler@specialolympics.ab.ca) or check out <http://albertatorchrun.ca>



If you want more information on upcoming events visit our website [www.albertatorchrun.ca](http://www.albertatorchrun.ca)

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