

STUDENTS AGAINST VIOLENCE EVERYWHERE ~ CHAPTERS CARRY THE FLAME

As one of the sponsors of the Torch Relay, Chevrolet nominated exemplary **SAVE** chapter members, advisors and staff across the country to participate as Olympic Torchbearers and support runners in the 2002 Olympic Torch Relay. Nominees were chosen as a result of each individual's commitment to school violence prevention and community service. In addition, **SAVE** Executive Director, Dr. Pamela Riley and **SAVE** Assistant Director, Carleen Wray, carried the torch in Washington, DC and were honored by President Bush at the White House on December 22nd for their service to the community.

"My relay segment for the torch was a blessed, emotional experience and I'm just grateful for SAVE and Chevrolet for giving me this awesome opportunity!" - Patrick Wafer, California

Paula Bostian, **SAVE** Olympic Torch Support Runner, runs through Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta, Georgia



Kate Catlin, **SAVE** Youth Advisory Board Chair Carries the Flame

Being a Torchbearer in the Olympic Torch Relay was perhaps the greatest moment of my life so far. I was so proud to be part of such a special event. It made it even more special that I was running as a representative of **SAVE**'s 88,000 plus students. The Olympic torch and the Olympics themselves are such a symbol of unity and peace that **SAVE** seems to fit in perfectly. As I carried the torch all I could think of was that I was the only one in the whole world carrying this flame right now. As I watch the Olympic Games on TV and they occasionally show the cauldron with the flame, I can't help but think that without me that flame would not be there. I helped it get to Salt Lake City. I am very proud to have carried the torch and I am equally as proud to have done it as a representative of **SAVE** - *Kate Catlin*



Osceola High School Students, Florida

When I'm older, I'm sure I'll realize it was one of the best experiences of my life. - *Daniel Lackey*

"I still can't find the words that would describe how I felt to be an Olympic Torch Support Runner. I enjoyed the experience of hearing the touching stories from the torch barers. The one that I thought was most touching would have been the father of the firefighter who died for his country in the the September 11th tragedy. Actually running with the torch was a natural high for me! I was delighted to be one of the chosen students from my school. - *Miranda Asche*

Rutland News

December 20, 2001

'Light The Fire Within' High school senior carries Olympic Torch

by Janetta Petkus

"While we were waiting for the large cauldron in the back of the truck, tons of people came up and just wanted to talk about it and look at it," says Kate Catlin, a former Rutland resident.

What everyone wanted to see was the flame that would inspire thousands of athletes and millions of onlookers at the 2002 Olympic Games in Salt Lake City.

The symbolic fire was recently brought from the site of the last games in Atlanta, Georgia to Clemson, South Carolina. There Catlin ignited her torch with light that originated in Greece, birthplace of the Olympic tradition, and then she ran two-tenths of a mile with it, arm held high.

"It's such a long journey to Salt Lake City that the flame goes across the country in relays, sometimes in convoys of Chevy cars with a Corvette in front," explains Catlin, one of the few honorees to actually carry the flame by hand. "It's always the same flame at every location but people use different torches.

"Two-tenths of a mile isn't much, but once you start running your arm gets surprisingly tired. I really enjoyed the experience. It was so much fun and I will definitely remember it forever."

Catlin was raised in Rutland, has a lot of cousins in the area, and now resides in Mebane, North Carolina. An active senior at Eastern Alamance High School, the soft spoken seventeen-year-old was nominated to be a torchbearer through the National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere. She chairs the National S.A.V.E. Youth Advisory Board and is a member of various school committees and clubs.

Treasured keepsakes

Once she was chosen for the Olympic Relay, packets of information arrived, as well as a white wind suit and white long-sleeved shirt that she will keep. She will also treasure her own torch, thanks to her aunt who bought the unique gift as a graduation present.

Rutland, MA

Catlin describes her hand-held cauldron replica as "expensive and really beautiful. It's about three inches wide at the top and very narrow at the bottom, very shiny. The top of the torch is old, the bottom is new and the middle— where you hold it — symbolizes 'bridging the gap' between the two."

The outside of the torch is engraved with the words "Salt Lake 2002." On the bottom the relay theme, "Light The Fire Within," is inscribed.

An athlete herself, Catlin accompanied her team to the state basketball championship at Chapel Hill this year. "It was really neat. I kept thinking: Michael Jordan played on this court," she remembers with unabated wonder.

Although she is a Teacher Cadet, Catlin is unsure where her career path will take her. It may resemble the long and adventurous journey of the flame she helped to transport from Greece to America. But whether she becomes "a teacher, or a lawyer, a psychiatrist, or maybe a journalist," she already knows what matters most to her.

"It definitely has to be a people job," she says.

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3 chosen to carry the torch

By Frank Carroll
Sentinel Staff Writer

KISSIMMEE -- Kissimmee's Daniel Lackey and Miranda Asche, along with Celebration's Frank Harmer, have been walking on air since they were chosen to run in the Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Torch Relay.

"Nervous? There's some anxiety, but I'm happy to be involved," said Daniel, 17, an Osceola High School senior.

Miranda, 16, an Osceola High junior, "was very surprised" to be selected but "very much looking forward to it."

Both teenagers are "support runners" for Friday's Central Florida run.

Harmer, a 48-year-old father of one and Celebration School social-studies teacher, will be a torchbearer.

"It was a total surprise when the package arrived from the Olympics around Thanksgiving. I had no idea," he said.

Nationwide, panels of community judges selected 11,500 torchbearers they think embody the Olympic spirit.

Salt Lake Organizing Committee President Mitt Romney added 100 relay slots for "champions of greatness," those who survived the terrorist attacks or helped rescue victims of Sept. 11.

Norma Evans-O'Connor, sponsor of Osceola High's Students Against Violence Everywhere and Students Against Destructive Decisions clubs, nominated the teenagers.

Hoisting the 3-pound, 33-inch-long torch that contains the Olympic flame is an honor not wasted on Osceola County's participants.

"It seems like a great thing to take part in," Daniel said. "When I'm older, I'm sure I'll realize it was one of the best experiences of my life."

Miranda, a first-year cross-country runner and avid collector of baseball cards, accepts

the assignment as "a privilege. It's something my family will remember me doing for generations."

Nominated by a former student, Harmer, retired military brass, shares a similar feeling.

"It's an incredible honor," he said. "Everybody's dream is to be in the Olympics. The relay allows an average person to be part of it. This will be a memory that will pass from generation to generation. The torch I'll carry will be prominently displayed somewhere in the house."

U.S. Olympic Committee President Sandy Baldwin calls the games "the greatest peacetime event in the whole world."

Flame left Olympia Nov. 19

The Olympic flame left ancient Olympia, Greece, about 135 miles southwest of Athens, on Nov. 19, headed for Atlanta, site of the 1996 Summer Games.

The United States' kickoff event begins Tuesday when the Torch Relay begins its 65-day journey to Utah, the site of the 2002 Winter Games.

Lambis Nikolaou, president of the Greek Olympic Committee, hopes the flame conveys a spirit of unity "at a time when humanity is shaken by tragic events."

The 13,500-mile Torch Relay by air, train, ship, dog sled, snowmobile, horse-drawn sleigh, ice skates and runners traverses 46 states -- bypassing Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and Hawaii -- and arrives Feb. 8 at Rice-Eccles Olympic Stadium in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Eighty Central Floridians will gather in Daytona Beach to run segments of the relay.

"It feels really good to be invited to take part," Daniel said. "I've never done anything remotely like this."

Preparation won't be much of a problem for Daniel, a three-sport letter winner at Osceola High, where he competes in cross-country, track and wrestling.

More than an athlete, Daniel ranks No. 1 academically among a class of 430 with a 3.98 grade point average.

Harmer terms himself "a recreational jogger" but expects no difficulty in carrying the Olympic flame for a segment he has been told that is about two-tenths of a mile.

Harmer, a Navy commander with 20 years aboard a frigate, guided missile destroyer and the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk, has former student Marlissa Morton to thank for his selection.

Marlissa, an eighth-grader a year ago in one of Harmer's world history honors classes, nominated her teacher for his ability to motivate her to do her best.

Sept. 11 widow chosen

The torch-relay team members are in good company.

"Everybody has a story," said Steve Young, a former San Francisco 49ers quarterback who heads an Olympic team of volunteers.

Lyz Glick will carry the torch Dec. 23 in New York City. Her late husband, Jeremy, was aboard United Flight 93 that went down Sept. 11 in rural Pennsylvania as passengers struggled with terrorists for control of the ill-fated jetliner.

From a public perspective, Glick says of her Olympic Torch Relay leg, "I think we're luck it's an Olympic year. [The Olympic Torch Relay is] an element of hope, especially with the games in the United States."

John Lipsey is another. Born blind, the 16-year-old snow skis and wrestles while studying theology at Juan Diego Catholic High in Draper, Utah.

"I think it's really good that I'm going to be allowed to do this, especially considering what happened Sept. 11. We need more positive things like this, rather than tragedies," John said.

Perris Jensen of Sandy, Utah, whose 100th birthday is Feb. 5, will help push the torch its final leg.

"It's quite an honor for an old man," Jensen said. "I was never much of an athlete, but I had the legs of a grasshopper."

Jensen isn't even the oldest. That honor belongs to 102-year-old Sarah McClelland of Xenia, Ohio.

In nominating McClelland, a great-granddaughter said, "Don't let her age fool you. She still lives alone, is in good health, plants her own flowers and is still active in her church and community."

Wire services were used in this report.

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