

**December 2, 2009**

### **Torchbearers will realize a dream – on the run**

Torchbearers come from far and wide to run 300 metres with the Olympic Flame. About two million people applied through RBC and Coca-Cola (the Torch Relay presenting partners) for 12,000 torchbearer spots.

When the Flame leaves the Orangeville celebration stage at the Tony Rose Memorial Sports Centre on December 28<sup>th</sup>, it will be carried by a team of local physicians.

**Dr. Barbara Corbett** will be part of the Ontario Medical Association (OMA) team that will carry the torch. Originally from England, Dr. Corbett has been a Canadian citizen for 22 years. She lives just outside Orangeville on a farm and keeps fit by competing horses at low level eventing (dressage, stadium and cross country jumping) and running a karate school “Laurel Martial Arts”. She competed at the 1970 Commonwealth Games for England.

“I will never forget the fantastic atmosphere and camaraderie amongst the athletes. I’m sure that being a torchbearer will generate the same thrill I felt all those years ago. I also feel I will be representing the many wonderful citizens of Orangeville who, as a family physician, I have been privileged to share time with over the past 20 years. My husband is happy for me, that I’ll be carrying the torch.”

The physicians applied individually at the invitation of the OMA. They were put together as a team and will cover a shorter distance than the individual torchbearers, prior to individual torchbearers carrying on with the relay in downtown Orangeville.

**Dr. Anna Davenport** loves sports and sports medicine. She has completed three Ironman competitions and multiple Olympic distance triathlons. She developed an interest in running in high school where she took part in track and cross-country running events. Originally from London, Ontario, she has lived in Orangeville for 20 years and is a family physician and sports medicine expert.

She expects a huge support crowd to be out on December 28<sup>th</sup>, cheering her on as the physician torchbearers leave the celebration site as a team. “It’s very cool to be a torchbearer. I am very excited about my five minutes of glory. I have been practicing and modelling my uniform as I run around the house. My family is excited; everyone I talk to is excited.” Dr. Davenport is married, with two athletic children who are in high school. She has purchased the torch for her family and they will put it in a main room of their home. “It will be around for a long time,” she says.

A runner since medical school, **Dr. David Cormier** says the Torch Relay isn’t a huge challenge but it’s going to be one of the highlights of his life. “It’s a thrill and an incredible honour to be chosen to carry the torch. I can hardly wait.” He also plans to purchase the torch and to have it on display in his home.

Married with three children, he says his family will be out to see the celebration and to see him in this new role. Dr. Cormier has completed two Ironman marathons and four half Ironmans. A native of St. John, New Brunswick, Dr. Cormier started his family practice in Shelburne in 1983, moving to Orangeville a year later.

**Dr. Ray Seto** thinks he just might walk with the torch to maximize his time with the Olympic Flame. “I’m looking forward to it and am very excited. There will be a lot of people, the Town will be out; it seems like everyone is into it.”

Originally from Oakville, he trained for ophthalmology in Vancouver and Victoria and practiced in Salmon Arm, B.C., before coming to Orangeville in 2003. He says he used to be athletic and is running every morning in anticipation of his stint in the Torch Relay – even if each physician will carry the torch only 50 metres.

Married with two children, his family intends to be at the celebration, and he hopes his Beaver troop, 3<sup>rd</sup> Orangeville, will also be out for the event – and to see him run or walk. Dr. Seto plans to purchase the torch and break it out every Friday in the summer to make the lighting of the community barbecue an extra special occasion. “Everyone has his or her own reasons for wanting to be in the Torch Relay,” Dr. Seto says. “I thought it would be neat, that I might not be around the next time the Olympics are in Canada. It’s a once-in a lifetime experience. It was really neat to see Orangeville and Tofino on CTV, out of all the communities in the country. Orangeville always makes the news for all sorts of reasons. It’s quirky in a good way.”

**Dr. Dave Josephson**, who works in family medicine and the emergency department and is president of the medical staff at Headwaters Health Care Centre, says he took up running about five years ago. He completed his first half marathon in September so he thinks he’s pretty safe in tackling 50 metres or so with the Olympic Flame.

“It was a wonderful thrill to find out I was to be a torchbearer,” Dr. Josephson says. “Growing up, it was always a family thing to sit and watch the Olympics together and now that’s become our tradition, with my wife and two children. It’s a real honour to be representing the medical staff, the Town of Orangeville, and my family in the Torch Relay. I’m even taking the day off to do this; it will be a rare day off. It will be a wonderful experience.”

Originally from Exeter, Dr. Josephson moved to Orangeville in 1998, setting up at the Orangeville Family Medical Centre. He has purchased the torch already and says it will sit on his fireplace mantle.

**Dr. Jeff McKinnon**, the Chief of Staff at Headwaters Health Care Centre, says his children laugh when he models his torchbearer uniform but he thinks it looks “pretty sharp”. He feels lucky and honoured to be selected as a torchbearer. “There are many deserving people in Orangeville and many wonderful

athletes; we are just a bunch of doctors so I'm pretty honoured." He says he's into "heavy training" for his run with the torch, as he describes himself as more of a hockey player than a runner.

A native of Windsor, Dr. McKinnon got his medical training in London, has an internal medicine practice, and has been in Orangeville for 17 years, with an office on Rolling Hills Drive. He is married and has five children who he says are jealous of his torchbearer role – or his uniform – and who are all involved in running and other sports. His family will definitely be at Orangeville's celebration. "I think the Town has really rallied around this event. Everyone is doing a lot of work for it."

**Dr. Stephen Milone** says his torch run will be the longest walk in human history because he's going to enjoy every second. "This is a completely exciting opportunity, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and I'm happy to do it." He quips that he's in training for his 50 metres, even though he has been into running for about five years and completed a half marathon three years ago. "I think I'll be okay with the torch relay," he says.

Married with two children, and a third expected very soon, Dr. Milone says the entire family will be at Orangeville's Torch Relay celebration, unless his wife is in labour. From the Toronto area, Dr. Malone has been in Orangeville for 3½ years, as a family physician and anaesthesiologist.

There is something about the Olympics that engages everyone, he says. "We all get excited about watching the Olympics," he says, adding that for him, a special moment was in 2002 when the men's and women's team won gold. "Everyone I have told about being a torchbearer is coming to watch. It's definitely a unique experience. It's such a big deal. I anticipate the whole Town will show up as well as the surrounding areas. It's going to be a huge party."

**Dr. David Stenning** says he's really excited about being a torchbearer. "Taking part really counts when it's on a grand stage like the Olympic Torch Relay. I jumped at the chance." Although not a "runner", Dr. Stenning says he likes running after things, adding he enjoys hockey and badminton. "I love watching all the Olympic sports on TV."

Born in New Brunswick, he grew up in Caledon Village and his family practice, located in the Lord Dufferin Centre, is in its 10<sup>th</sup> year.

Rounding out the physicians' torchbearer team will be the husband and wife team of Dr. Cathy Candusso, and Dr. Peter Cino.

**Justin Harris** of Kitchener is one of the torchbearers selected for the Orangeville section of the cross-Canada Torch Relay. He couldn't be happier about running 300 metres with the Olympic Flame.

Originally from England, Mr. Harris has lived in Canada since 1978. He is a Municipal Law Enforcement and Property Standards Officer for the City of Kitchener.

“I have always been interested in the Olympics and it’s a great thrill to have a little part in it.” He applied online through RBC to be a torchbearer, noting his work to help raise funds for prostate cancer research for the past six years by sitting on the board for the Grand River chapter of the Motorcycle Ride for Dad, an annual motorcycle ride that starts with a police-escorted parade through Kitchener and Waterloo and then continues on for a 200-kilometre poker run.

After being pre-selected, more paperwork followed and he was approved pending background checks. Subsequently, he was told what day he would be carrying the torch. Then in early November, he was notified that he would be running in Orangeville and given an exact location.

He says he’s not a runner but thinks he’s good for 300 metres – however, he hasn’t ruled out some practice time. “I will probably run a few times just to see what 300 metres feels like. I’m so excited I can’t believe it. When Kitchener announced its final torchbearer (in early November) it made it all seem so real.”

Torchbearers have the option of purchasing a torch and Mr. Harris has already made that commitment. “It’s a once-in-a-lifetime chance to own a piece of Olympic history.” He purchased a stand to display the torch in his living room. “It will be a centrepiece and will make a great conversation piece.”

He discovered that the Town of Orangeville was trying to contact local torchbearers through the Orangeville Torch Relay page on Facebook. He says his family is also very excited about him being a torchbearer and they will also be in Orangeville on December 28<sup>th</sup>.

“Coming from a Greek background (my mom’s side) it makes it even more special for me. I am hoping to have lots of the family there including my wife, two boys, mother, brother and sister. Several other members of my family have said they will try to be there. My oldest son, Ethan, 7, is so excited that he has even told his teacher and wants me to bring the torch in to his school after the Christmas holidays.”

Mr. Harris plans to run his leg of the Torch Relay with pride – and a giant grin on his face.

**Jason Ruby** of Orangeville was announced by RBC as a torchbearer. He will run his section of the Torch Relay the day after the celebration in Orangeville, after the Olympic Flame has been in Owen Sound.

Mr. Ruby has lived in Orangeville for almost 10 years. He works full-time at Husky Injection Molding Systems in Bolton and operates a part-time video production and website business called Quake Multimedia. In the past, he has served on the Mayor’s Youth Advisory Committee, the Economic Development Committee, and the Physician Search Committee. He plans to return to volunteering in the community when his children are a bit older.

After seeing the RBC ad for torchbearers, Mr. Ruby signed himself and his wife up for the adventure. “I thought it would be a great experience and something for the kids to see. I received the first e-mail in the

summer notifying me that I had made the short list and an e-mail on November 6th confirming it. I feel very lucky to have been chosen, especially with so many people having applied.”

Mr. Ruby also plans to purchase the torch and will find a spot to feature it in his home. “It will be a great conversation starter.”

He plans to be at the Orangeville celebration, along with his entire family. “It’s all very exciting and I am very grateful for the opportunity to participate in the torch relay.”

**Alison Hird** is also honoured to have been selected as a torchbearer. She says she was actually trying to apply for her son to carry the torch but as the iCoke account was in her name she could only put forward her own name.

“I feel honoured and thrilled to have been selected and am very excited. I am not an athletic person, but when I was young my ambition was to be a gym teacher. I ran for the school and was a champ on the trampoline. Then at 16 I had a long spell in hospital with a spinal curvature which put a damper on my aspired career hopes. My family moved to Canada from England in 1997, and we became proud Canadians in 2002. We technically live in Caledon just south of Highway 9, but we shop and socialize in Orangeville.”

“My husband and I ‘give-back’ to the community as we operate “What’s On Ontario”, a community website – [www.WhatsOn.ca](http://www.WhatsOn.ca). The site is run completely on volunteer time. The site supports non-profits, the arts and anyone is welcome to promote their events completely free of charge.”

As the roads could be icy, Alison has elected to walk her part of the relay on Day 61 – December 29 – in Thornbury as the Torch Relay travels from Owen Sound to Barrie.

Alison works at the Dufferin County Museum and Archives as the Collections Manager (for artifacts). She oversees the listing and logging of the wonderful donations the community gives to the museum.

“We were thrilled to receive our iCoke Cheer box,” Alison says. “We have flags, a banner and more. Our household is counting the days until my big day. My family members and friends who live in many different countries are rooting for me and sending good wishes.”

As Orangeville’s Community Torchbearer, boxing champion **Bryon Mackie** will carry the Olympic Flame on its final 300 metres to the stage where he will light the 1.3-metre high celebration cauldron, in a move similar to the dramatic highlight of what will occur during the Opening Ceremony for the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games on February 12.