

# Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run to run through Macoupin County

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**LITCHFIELD** - On June 8, law enforcement from the area will be participating in the **Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics**. Officers from the following departments will take part in the run; Illinois State Police, Macoupin County Sheriff's Office, Gillespie Police Department, Carlinville Police Department, Girard Police

Department and Virden Police Department. Running alongside these officers there will be personnel from the Illinois Army National Guard as well as civilians who support Special Olympics.

The Special Olympics is a set of Olympic type athletic events for adults and children who have intellectual disabilities. The first Special Olympics in Illinois was held July 10, 1968 at Soldier Field in Chicago. At the event approximately 1,000 athletes participated in the games. Today over 21,300 athletes participate in the Special Olympic Illinois Games on Illinois State University campus in Bloomington. Special Olympics has grown from Illinois being the only state in 1968 to today being in all fifty states and internationally in over 170 countries around the world.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run is the largest year round fundraiser benefiting Special Olympics. Law enforcement started guarding “The Flame of Hope” in 1986. In the past 30 years, the Law Enforcement Torch Run has donated over 39 million dollars to Special Olympics. The torch run is approximately 1,500 miles in length and it is ran in 23 different routes.

This year District 18 Troopers, as well as, the officers listed above will start the leg at Gillespie Police Department at approximately 7:00 A.M. and follow IL-4 north to the district line on the north edge of Virden. Our portion of the leg is 33 miles long and we pass the torch to The Illinois State Police Academy who run the torch from Virden to the steps of the Illinois State Capitol.

Please be aware of the runners if you are traveling in the area. There will be several vehicles following the runners as well with emergency lights on as well as their hazard lights.