

# OUR TOWNS Cedar County

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## Special Olympians Race Through Hartington

### Torch Lights The Way To State Games In Lincoln

BY TRAVIS GULBRANDSON  
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HARTINGTON, Neb. — The streets of Hartington were jammed with athletes and their supporters last week as they helped carry an Olympic torch toward its final destination.

On Tuesday, July 13, dozens of athletes and members of area and national law enforcement agencies took part in the Law Enforcement Torch Run Final Leg, in honor of the 2010 Special Olympics Summer Games.

"I would like to thank everyone involved in making this day for the Special Olympics so special. This couldn't happen without a great organization, and my hat is off to them," said Tim Burbach, president of Hartington's City Council, during a post-run program held at the First Congregational Church of Christ.

The torch run started at the schools, with participants working their way north on Broadway, before heading west until they hit Highway 57. They then went south until they arrived at First Congregational.

The run — which was coordinated through the City of Hartington, the Cedar County Sheriff's Department, the Hartington Fire Department and the Hartington Chamber of Commerce — took place days before the Special Olympics Summer Games kicked off on July 18 in Lincoln, Neb. The games will conclude July 23.

During the post-run program, Burbach also read a proclamation from Hartington Mayor Bill Yates that proclaimed July 13, 2010, officially to be Law Enforcement Final Leg Torch Run Day.

One athlete who was on hand for the event and is participating in this year's summer games was New Hampshire resident Nate Webb. He has been a Special Olympics athlete for the past 13 years, competing in the 10K, the 15K and the 25K.

He spoke of the importance the torch run can hold for the athletes.

"This has been a wonderful part of my Special Olympics experience," Webb said. "I've made several friends in the law enforcement community, and what great role models they are."

Trey Dupuy of the Jonesboro, Ark., police department said this statement should be reversed.

When Dupuy was in the police academy, he was



Special Olympics athletes, supporters and members of various area and national law enforcement agencies participated in the Law Enforcement Torch Run Final Leg in Hartington, Neb. The 2010 Special Olympics Summer Games are currently under way in Lincoln, Neb.

given a presentation by a firefighter. "He told us that God created firefighters so police officers would have heroes," Dupuy said. "I struggled with that for several years before I became involved in Special Olympics. Then I realized that God created Special Olympics athletes so police officers could have heroes."

Webb — who became involved in athletics at 10 years old and in his spare time bikes "up to 50 miles" each day — said competing has been very beneficial for him.

"Special Olympics has given me the opportunity to experience and compete in sports that I might not have had the chance to do without that great organization," he said. "My coaches have given me the knowledge and abilities that I have needed, and have always encouraged me."

"I hope that you'll do for your athletes what Special Olympics and law enforcement assistants have done for me. Give them the encouragement, ability, skill, mentors, pride and memories. It will last them a lifetime," he said.

Coleridge, Neb., resident and Special Olympics coach Jeff Wemhoff also spoke, telling the crowd his decision to become a coach was one of the best he ever made.

"I can tell you that this is the most rewarding thing that I've ever done," he said. "I invite everyone and anyone here, if you have not had the chance to see the Special Olympians (compete), then do so. It will open your eyes and warm your heart."

Wemhoff also introduced Yankton residents Jacob Anderson and Kyle Duke, who will play basketball in this year's summer games as part of the South Dakota Special Olympics Basketball Team.

"We wish these young men good luck, and we invite anyone out to come and watch these two play," Wemhoff said.

Tom Grube of the Hartington Chamber of Commerce concluded the program by thanking everyone involved in organizing the day's events, especially the law enforcement officers.

"Thank you to the guardians of the flame for sharing this experience with us today," Grube said. "And to every one of the athletes, good luck in Lincoln."

Approximately 4,000 athletes, 8,000 young athletes and 5,000 coaches and volunteers will participate in the 2010 Special Olympics Summer Games. For more information about Special Olympics Nebraska, visit [www.sone.org](http://www.sone.org).

### Bow Valley Schuetzenfest Scheduled For Aug. 1

BOW VALLEY, Neb. — The Bow Valley Schuetzenfest will be held on Sunday, Aug. 1. The event runs from 8 a.m.-10 p.m.

The Schuetzenfest is an ancient festival brought over from Germany 114 years ago. Translated it means "Shooting Fest." The day has many events but the highlight of the day and primary objective of the entire festival is the "Shooting of the Bird." A hand-carved wooden bird is fastened to the top of a 40-inch wooden pole. Each member the Schuetzenfest Marching Guard takes their turn with the Schuetzenfest 30/30 rifle to knock the bird off the pole and become the new King of Bow Valley, a title they will retain for five years until the next Schuetzenfest.

For more information, contact Randy Noecker at 402 254 9744 or e-mail [randy.noecker@interstates.com](mailto:randy.noecker@interstates.com).

## JOBS

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Carte Goodwin of West Virginia being sworn in just in time to cast the 60th vote to break a GOP filibuster — will cap a battle of more than four months that's featured bad blood and a shift in sentiment among key Republicans.

Though the economy is said to be slowly recovering, the jobless rate remains painfully high at 9.5 percent. And Obama, putting a human face on those hard times, brought three unemployed people to the Rose Garden with him on Monday.

An increasing number of people, however, have been out of work for so long that they have exhausted their eligibility for benefits, which ends at 99 weeks in most states. This measure won't help them.

In Bellevue, Wash., for example, unemployment benefits ran out last week for 63-year-old Sherry Blum. She's been job hunting since August 2008. Already behind on her mortgage, the loss of her weekly benefits means she will have to sell her town house.

"Unemployment (benefits) helped me stay just above water," she said. Blum plans to sell her town house, with its \$1,600 monthly mortgage, and move into a small apartment. But with the housing market still ailing, that could take time. Three other homeowners in her development have taken their homes off the market recently after failing to sell them.

"Hopefully my house will sell before it goes into foreclosure," she said.

The Senate is likely to pass the current measure late Tuesday. The House is expected to clear it for Obama's signature as soon as Wednesday.

Two Republicans, Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins of Maine, are expected to vote with the Democrats Tuesday, as they did at the end of June. The measure stalled then because the death of Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., and the participation in the filibuster of Nebraska Democrat Ben Nelson left the party one short of the 60 votes needed.

With Goodwin, the Senate breakdown is 57 Democrats, 41 Republicans and two independents who normally vote with the Democrats.

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