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July 29, 2015

THE *village* SPIRIT!



enewsletter no. 114

The Torch is on the Move

The significance of the Olympic Torch goes back in history to the ancient Olympic Games in Olympia, Greece. According to the old myth, a flame was ignited by the sun and kept burning until the closing of the Olympic Games. However, the Special Olympics Torch Run involves something a bit more special, the Law Enforcement of the host city runs the torch. The mission of the **Law Enforcement Torch Run® (LETR)** for Special Olympics is to increase awareness and raise funds for the Special Olympics movement. Each year, the LETR initiative grows bigger and better. This year the Los Angeles Police Department had the honor of being the LETR for the Special Olympics World Games and by special invitation Valley Village participated in two of the Torch Run ceremonies.



Essentially, the LETR is an actual running event, in which officers and athletes run the Flame of Hope™ (the torch) to the Opening Ceremony of local Special Olympics competitions as well as State, National and World Games. The Flame of Hope was lit from the rays of the sun in Greece, the home of the Olympics, and this year it traveled across the sea to the United States where it journeyed to communities throughout the country and Southern California, ended at the Opening Ceremony in the historic Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum.

Sincerely,
Your friends at **Valley Village**



The Host with the Most

The San Fernando Valley was host to over 7 countries for the Special Olympics

Before a single one of the 7,000 Special Olympics athletes competed at the 2015 World Games, Special Olympics delegations from around the world were treated to three memorable days of recreation, entertainment, and cultural exchange at their Host Towns. Several towns in the San Fernando Valley elected to host the delegates from around the world, including Northridge which was co-chaired by Valley Village's own Executive Director, Debra Donovan.

Many wonderful events and activities were carefully planned and executed marvelously. At noon on Thursday, July 22, the **Westfield Topanga Mall** was filled with excitement. Valley Village had the honor to partner with Westfield Topanga Mall to host an all-day event for nearly 500 Special Olympics athletes and coaches from countries round the world. This event featured a delicious lunch provided by California Pizza Kitchen and an inspiring ceremony of the Law Enforcement Torch Run® escorted by the Los Angeles Police Department. The ceremony was concluded by an exciting streamer launch then the athletes and coaches rushed off to special store events planned by participating retailers to do fun activities.



Valley Village Volunteers Jason and Nathan at the Westfield Topanga Mall Special Olympics Event

The management team at Westfield Topanga went above and beyond to create this unique day for the athletes. Host Town volunteers and people from Special Olympics World Games worked on the event to help put it together. Even the retailers were involved in the pre-planning stages. The success of this event is also due in part to the 70 **Valley Village** volunteers who dedicated their time to making July 22 extra special and welcoming for the athletes and coaches. All of the volunteers deserve big thanks.

#FlameOfHope

Run with Fire

A song of inspiration motivated every heart the morning of July 23 at Randal Simmons Park hosted by **Councilman Bob Blumenfield**. The "Eye of the Tiger" tune carried through the crowd as people celebrated the athletes participating in the Special Olympics World Games. Juno Rada provided award winning music. Juno along with clients from Valley Village welcomed the Torch Run and motivated the crowd. This ceremony provided encouragement to the athletes. Best wishes in the games were given to the athletes by Councilman Bob Blumenfield. Good Luck to all the athletes!



Juno Rada, Clinton, Shawn, Jeffrey and Michael performing for the Law Enforcement Torch Runners

Village Run or Walk

Walk or Run don't forget to wear a costume

It's that time of year again. The **Village Run/Walk** is back! Luckily for you, the run/walk will take place on Halloween, Oct. 31, 2015, so come as your alter ego or your favorite super hero.

The 5K route will follow the Metro Orange Line from the Sepulveda station to a family festival at Los Angeles Valley College. You don't want to miss this one.

If you would like to be on the committee, **drop us a note!**



Village Run/Walk
Halloween Fun Run
Run/Walk 2015 Halloween
Fun Run

2015 Calendar

Oct 31 **Village Run/Walk** - Halloween Fun Run



Challenge Yourself



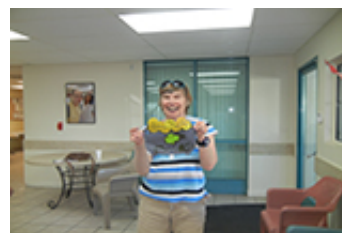
Facebook Challenge

Valley Village needs more **Likes**! Our goal is to get 110 more **Likes** in 110 days. So that's 1 new **Like** a day. With amazing support from our friends like you, we can do this! Please **Like** us then Share with your friends to **Like** us too!



Let Them Match You

Does your Employer have an **Employee Giving program**? Some companies will match you dollar for dollar or dollar per hour when you give or volunteer to your favorite charity. If you're not sure, you should ask your company.



Super Saturdays

Ever want to spend your Saturdays doing something good? Well, **volunteering** your time with Valley Village clients during our Saturday field trips is a great way to assist people in need and see unique places in LA County.

"Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."
- motto of the Special Olympics

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