

Torchbearers selected for Lawrence

By Deangelo McDaniel
Managing Editor

It's been said the base on which Lawrence County stands was built by ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

During a brief ceremony at the courthouse on Thursday, eight ordinary Lawrence Countians were honored when they were selected to carry the Olympic torch through the county on June 29.

The eight were selected through the Olympic Torch Relay Community Torchbearer Program.

The Lawrence Countians who will be a part of history are Town Creek's Neil Hall, Nancy Large and Anita Pahman; and Moulton's Charles Jordan, James Pinion, Eric Warren, Joshua White and Ronnie White.

The eight are among 86 people selected in a 10-county area to carry the Olympic flame through North Alabama.

At the request of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic

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Ronnie White



Anita Pahman



Eric Warren



Joshua White

Coca Cola is seeking torchbearer candidates

By Deangelo McDaniel
Managing Editor

For those who still dream of carrying the Olympic torch through Lawrence County, there is still hope.

And, Coca Cola, the sponsor of the Olympic Torch Relay, is providing the opportunity, according to Frank Troupe a sales

representative with Coca Cola's Decatur office.

Troupe said two torchbearers and four escort runners will be selected from Lawrence and Morgan counties through the "Share the Spirit" program.

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Neil Hall



Charles Jordan



Nancy Large



James Pinion

Torch

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Games, the Community Hero program was facilitated through United Way of America.

United Way of Lawrence County was one of 1,301 United Way organizations to publicize the program, distribute applications and encourage local heroes and people who know them to apply or nominate someone to carry the Olympic flame.

United Way Chairman Fred Gillespie said the torch program is designed to honor people who have extraordinary feats or even simple acts of kindness.

Gillespie said the United Way region including Lawrence County was one of 147 judging locations across the country.

The judging region included Franklin, Jackson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison and Morgan counties.

"We carefully convened a panel of 10 local leaders who represented a varied cross-section of the area to judge the applicants," Gillespie said.

Judging took place in January.

"We discovered that Lawrence County is filled with heroes and, while not everyone could be chosen as a torchbearer, we believe the community heroes selected today represent what is best about our county," Gillespie added.

The age range of the torchbearers selected for Lawrence County were between 14 and 67.

Eric Warren, a student at Lawrence County High School, was the youngest torchbearer selected for Lawrence County.

He was nominated by his parents for winning several state running titles and helping repair homes for needy families.

Charles Jordan, who runs six to eight miles per day, was the oldest runner selected.

The 67-year-old author of several books was nominated by the late Rep. Sam Letson.

Olympic officials said there were more than one million applications to select the 5,300 torch runners from.

There were 972 applications from the 10-county North Alabama region.

On April 27, the first of the torchbearers will receive the Olympic flame in Los Angeles to begin the 84-day, 15,000-mile journey across America.

While the addition of 16 days of Olympic competition, the torch will burn for 100 days on American soil.

After traveling through 42 states, the torch concludes in Atlanta at the opening ceremony of the '96 centennial Olympic games on July 19.

The torch will stop at several locations on its course to Atlanta. One of the stops will be at the Jesse Owens Memorial Park on June 29.

The 30-minute ceremony will pay tribute to Lawrence County native and Olympic hero Jesse Owens, who lived in Oakville until he was seven.

Owens won four gold medals in the 1936 Olympics, ironically the same year the torch relay began.