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THE TALENTED MR. DAMON

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MOVIES, E1



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Brian Elliott's the star as the Sens shut out Philly
SPORTS, B1

VANCOUVER 2010 WINTER GAMES

Olympic spirit shines

Skating champion, torch draw applause in the House

BY MATTHEW PEARSON

The Olympic torch made a historic visit to the House of Commons Thursday in what the tiny torchbearer called the "greatest honour anyone could have."

"Imagine an 8-year-old girl being asked to carry the torch into the Parliament Buildings," said figure-skating legend Barbara Ann Scott.

The Olympic gold medalist told reporters she thought the chief executive of the Vancouver Olympics' organizing committee, John Furlong, was kidding when he called to ask her if she was up to the task.

"And then I found out it was for real and I'm thrilled," said a beaming Scott.

At five-foot-two and less than 90 pounds, Scott joked it was hard for organizers to find a white tracksuit small enough to fit her.

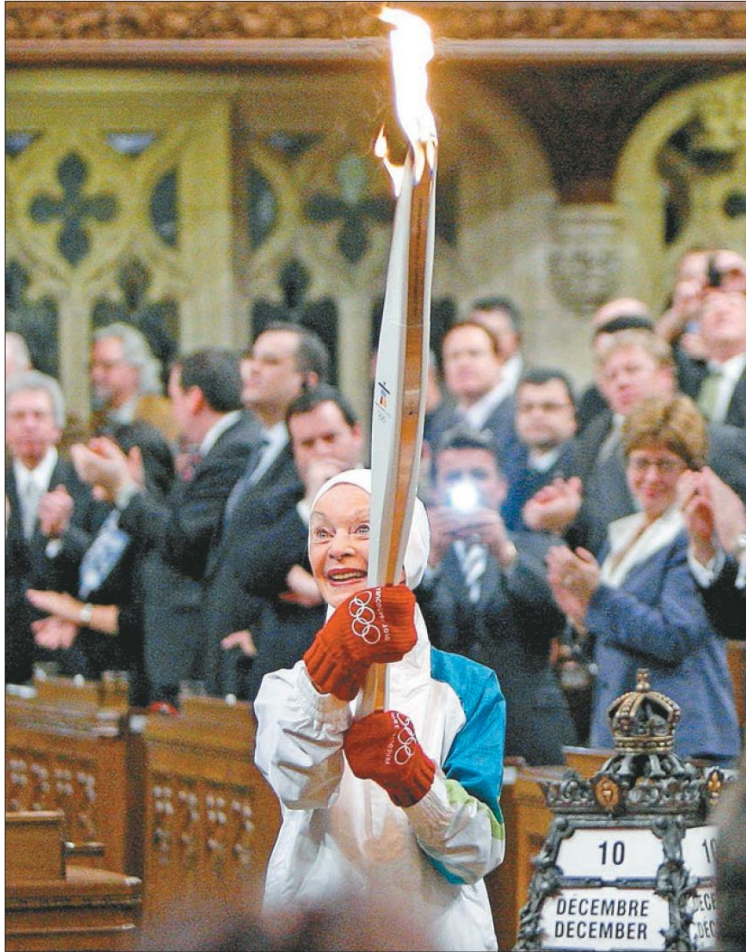
Thursday's visit to Ottawa marked the first time an Olympic torch has entered the House of Commons.

The torch was lit in the rotunda and carried down the prime ministers' corridor, past portraits of Pierre Trudeau and Brian Mulroney, both of whom saw Canada host the Olympics during their time in office.

MPs rose to their feet, chanted "Go Canada Go!" and snapped photos with their BlackBerrys as Scott marched down the middle of the green-carpeted chamber, hoisting the torch into the air. House of Commons Speaker Peter Milliken congratulated the Olympic organizing committee and wished Canadian athletes well on their journey to what he called "Canada's Games."

Scott, who became known as "Canada's sweetheart" after her gold-medal win at the 1948 Winter Games in St. Moritz, Switzerland, said her hopes were high that Canada will take home "quite a few" gold medals at the Games, which start in Vancouver next February.

She's not alone. Athletes and members of the Canadian Olympic Committee were



CHRIS WATTE/REUTERS

MPs rise from their seats as Barbara Ann Scott, who became 'Canada's sweetheart' after her gold-medal figure skating win at the 1948 Winter Games in Switzerland, carries the Olympic torch in its first-ever House of Commons visit Thursday.

also on the Hill Thursday, lobbying the Harper government to continue funding the Own the Podium program past March 2010.

Launched in 2005, the program brings government and corporate sponsors together to strengthen policies and programs that help Canadian athletes achieve excellence in sport.

Chris Rudge, the chief executive of the Canadian Olympic

Committee, said a government commitment of \$22 million annually would help Canadian athletes reach their goals, one of which is a first-place finish at the Games.

To do that, Rudge said Canada will need to win between 28 and 34 medals. Canada placed third at the 2006 Winter Olympics with 24 medals, up from 17 medals and a fourth-place finish at the 2002 Winter Games in Salt Lake City.

ONLINE



FOLLOW THE TORCH DAY 43

See photos and an interactive route map at

OTTAWACITIZEN.COM /TORCH

READ ABOUT THE 2010 WINTER GAMES

OTTAWACITIZEN.COM/2010

SEND US YOUR PICS We're building a map of photos from the torch's route.

OTTAWACITIZEN.COM /HOTPICS

'When you see stuff like this, it's hard not to have a tear'

For members of the torch relay support team, there are more ups than downs on their road trip across Canada, **BRUCE DEACHMAN** writes.

It was Day Thirtysomething — 34, if memory serves, but Serge St. Louis admits it all kind of blurs after a while — of the Olympic torch relay, and the flame was just warming up at 6:50 a.m. as it wended its way through the streets of Alma, Que., en route that day to Quebec City.

It seemed to St. Louis that very nearly the whole town of 30,000 had come out to watch the torch pass by. Moved by

this pre-dawn rally — of what? Team spirit? National pride? Olympic fervour? Pyromaniacal ecstasy? — he called home to Apple Hill, Ont., halfway between Maxville and Cornwall. When his wife answered, he simply told her to listen, rolled down his car window and held his cellphone aloft.

"Kids were just screaming, yelling and cheering," he recalls. "She had chills at the

other end, so you can imagine what I felt."

The torch run, St. Louis says, is generating excitement like this all across Canada, and will work its magic in the national capital region for four days beginning today, when it arrives in Gatineau.

St. Louis, 43, is one of two people — Art Lewis is the other, as the two alternate in roughly two-week stints — in charge of the fleet of vehicles that accompanies and supports the Olympic torch on its 106-day, 45,000-kilometre journey across Canada.

See TORCH on PAGE A4



HANDOUT PHOTO

Serge St. Louis is one of two people in charge of the fleet that accompanies the Olympic torch relay across Canada. He says he loves the job, and the scenery leaves him in awe.

Why language policies are so farcical

When it comes to hirings, firings, rules can be bent when it suits the situation



KELLY EGAN COMMENTARY

In a country like Canada, in a city like Ottawa, bilingualism is actually a sound idea.

We have a significant francophone population and it is a laudable goal, in government circles, to allow citizens to work, communicate and be served in the language of their choice.

Yet has it become so mawkish. We are fools.

What a week to underline the absurd nature of how official bilingualism is implemented in the capital.

An update on the post-mistress in Pakenham in a moment. She may well win the day.

The city of Ottawa has just hired a new fire chief. His name is John deHooge, 53, and he was most recently the fire chief in Waterloo.

He will oversee a department with an annual operating budget of about \$120 million and a workforce consisting of about 1,000 employees. He will be paid well in excess of \$100,000 a year.

Now, by his own admission, he is nowhere near bilingual. Yet he beat out 317 other candidates.

Maybe it matters not that he cannot speak French. Fires will burn, water will pour from hoses in any language.

Here's the point: they bend the rules whenever it suits them. The city of Ottawa has a lengthy bilingualism policy that says the municipality shall "make every effort to appoint bilingual people to all management positions and especially those of General Manager."

The city's position seems to be that deHooge's other qualifications outweigh his language deficiency. On top of that, he is pledging to learn French.

All fine and dandy. Maybe he is the right choice.

See EGAN on PAGE A2

Inside: Union leaders hail Ottawa's new fire chief, **C1**

Online: Have your say on bilingualism in the capital at ottawacitizen.com

WORLD



Delinquent dolphin Moko was the hit of a little New Zealand town. Then, he became a teenager, **A8**

Ottawa Citizen (Front Page & A4), December 11, 2010
Headline: 'When you see stuff like this, it's hard not to have a tear'
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