

**WHITEHORSE**  
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—JEUX DU—  
**CANADA**  
—GAMES—

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**April 6, 2006**

### **Canada Games Roly McLenahan Torch Lit For Journey to North Pole**

**(April 6, 2006) Ottawa** – At a media event today on Parliament Hill, the Canada Games launched the torch relay leading up to the 2007 Canada Winter Games with a flurry of drumming, throat singing and activities for local area school children. This celebration marks the first leg of a truly amazing geographic feat. The Roly McLenahan Torch will travel from Ottawa to the North Pole, across three territories, and finally reach Whitehorse to light the cauldron during the Whitehorse 2007 Canada Games opening ceremony on February 24, 2007.

Sue Hylland, President and CEO of the Canada Games Council, and Piers McDonald, President of the 2007 Host Society, used the Centennial Flame on Parliament Hill to light the Roly McLenahan Torch, joined by two Canada Games Alumni, Olympian Jennifer Botterill and Paralympian Hervé Lord, both gold medallists in Turin. It was then passed symbolically from the Nunavut Minister of Culture, Language, Elder and Youth, Louis Tapardjuk, to the Member of Parliament of the Northwest Territories, Dennis Bevington, to the Yukon Minister for Community Services, Glenn Hart. This relay symbolized the journey that Canadian athletes will take to get to the 2007 Canada Games in Whitehorse. Under the sound of drums, Minister Hart finally passed the torch to Waneek Horn Miller, a former Olympian and co-captain of the Canadian Waterpolo Team, who will accompany the torch for the first part of its trip back to the Yukon.

“With the lighting of the torch, we are officially starting the countdown to the 2007 Canada Winter Games,” explained Sue Hylland, President and CEO of the Canada Games Council. “2007 is fast approaching and we are excited to welcome Canada’s elite amateur athletes to come and compete at these truly unique Games.”

Following the Torch lighting ceremony, local school children were invited to compete in a symbolic educational Canada Games day. Sport stations were set up on the Hill and the children got an opportunity to try activities representing Canada Games sports as well as two Arctic sports and Dene games.

“Today is a great example of what the Canada Games mean to Canada as nation,” said Whitehorse Mayor Ernie Bourassa at the press conference. “The North is a valuable asset to our country and not all Canadians get the opportunity to visit it. We are excited to open our city to athletes and spectators from across Canada and showcase the North in this truly unique event.”

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From Ottawa, the Torch will travel to Alert, Nunavut, where it will be flown over the North Pole and delivered to Ward Hunt Island, the most northerly point in Canada. On Ward Hunt Island the Roly McLenahan Torch will be used to light three northern torches. Each torch will then travel in one territory and together, they will visit all 83 communities in the North before reuniting in Whitehorse for the 2007 Canada Winter Games opening ceremony, scheduled for February 24, 2007.

“The Canada Games combine high level sport competition with cultural activities from across our country,” said Piers McDonald, President of the Whitehorse 2007 Canada Winter Games Host Society. “Out torch relay is bringing spirit and enthusiasm from across the North to Whitehorse and will add to the excitement of these Games.”

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*Held once every two years, alternating between summer and winter, the Canada Games represent the highest level of national competition for the next generation of national team athletes and future champions. The Games have been hosted in every province at least once since their inception in Quebec City during Canada's Centennial in 1967. The Games are proud of their contribution to Canada's sport development system in addition to their lasting legacy of sport facilities, community pride and national unity.*

*The organization of the Canada Games is made possible through the tireless dedication of the local Host Society, the contribution and support of the federal, provincial/territorial and host municipal governments and the Canada Games Council. The 2007 Canada Winter Games will be held in Whitehorse, Yukon.*

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