

USC 'hero' to carry torch

■ On June 25, math professor Richard Hudson will help carry the Olympic flame as it makes its way to Atlanta for the 1996 Olympic Games.

CECE VON KOLNITZ News Editor

In six days, math professor Richard Hudson will know what it feels like to have Olympic glory at his fingertips.

Hudson is one of several Columbia "community heroes" who will participate in the June 25 Olympic Torch Relay.

Nominated by his wife, Hudson was chosen to carry the torch because of his work with Boy Scouts of America.

During his years as a scout master and volunteer, Hudson helped 37 scouts attain their Eagle rank and won the organization's highest awards. The thought never crossed his mind that his service work would win him the opportunity to carry the Olympic flame.

"The honor of carrying the torch is probably the greatest honor that I've really ever had," Hudson said. "It just means a lot to me."

Getting in shape

Hudson says he's ready for the 1 kilometer he's responsible for running in the relay. He said he runs every day and in all sorts of places. Almost every other day, Hudson says, he runs for 13 to 20 miles.

"I will just pick up and run some place ten miles away and then run ten miles back," Hudson said.

Hudson started running after he got his Ph.D. and said he's been working out to stay physically fit for about 25 years.

But Hudson wasn't as athletic as he thought at first, a fact he found out the first time he tried to run a long distance.

"I went to a track and tried to run three miles

and couldn't even do it in 27 minutes. I stopped, breathing hard, and I said, 'This lifestyle has got to stop.'"

Within three years after he made the decision to get in shape and stay that way, Hudson was running marathons.

'A force of peace'

Ever since childhood, Hudson has agreed with the philosophy of the Olympics—to foster peace through athletic competition.

"The Olympics are a force for peace in the world," Hudson said.

Hudson can remember conversations he had with his father "when I was first trying to comprehend how it was that people had wars."

"I remember saying, 'Why don't they just forget the wars and do like the Olympics?'" Hudson said. "We'd go in there, and we'd put our athletes up and decide the issues on that basis instead of with guns and bullets and people dying."

He said another reason he is honored to have been named a torch bearer is because he feels a connection to Greece. His father loved Greek history.

"Instead of reading bed time stories to us when we were little, he'd read Aristophanes," Hudson said. "Among the first books that I read were books about Greek history, the Illiad and the Odyssey."

Hudson the scout master

When he was a teenager, Hudson and his twin brother were the only Eagle Scouts in their district. So it was only natural for Hudson to take the job when his sons needed a Weibelos leader.

At the end of last year, when most of the time



CARRYING THE TORCH

his troop meetings would consist of he and some of his Eagle Scouts getting together and playing basketball, time constraints and his interest in doing more research led him away from being a scout master.

"It was a full-time job," Hudson said. "One time I was working well over 40 hours a week just on scouts."

Hudson said over a five year period, all together he had spent six months camping with his troop in the mountains of Georgia, North Carolina and other parts of the Southeast.

Extraordinary things

Even though Hudson no longer has a troop, he says he plans to continue his community service work.

"I think that community service is something that I'll always be involved in," Hudson said. Life has been good. I've been given alot, good health and everything else. I feel like I owe it."

Hudson said the whole idea of rewarding "community heroes" by having them carry the torch is "wonderful."

"There are so many things that sound good that become commercialized. 'Community hero' could sound like a jargon phrase," Hudson said. "The people that I met at the press conference who will be carrying the torch with me made me realize that these were really good people who've done wonderful things."

"I think the Atlanta committee did a good thing in trying to find ordinary people who've done extraordinary things."

Provost candidate videos available

CECE VON KOLNITZ News Editor

The last of four provost candidates who were invited to campus during the month of June will visit for interviews and an open session Thursday and Friday.

The three who have already come to campus are Margaret Cozzens, director of Elementary, Secondary and Informal Science Education of the National Science Foundation, Terry Hickey associate provost for academic programs at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and Risa Palm, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Oregon.

Leslie Sims, dean of the graduate college at the University of Iowa, will be at USC June 20 through June 21.

A video tape of Cozzens' and Hickey's presentations are available from the reserve room of Thomas Cooper Library or the provost's office.

In a June 11 interview, President John Palms said he's been asking everyone who meets the candidates what their impressions are.

Palms described the two days each candidate visits as an example of the work they will be doing

"If a candidate gets tired after these two days, they're going to be very tired when they become provost. It's that kind of a job," Palms said.



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