



STAN HOWE PHOTO

**Caresse Ley will carry the Olympic torch from City Hall to 123 Collier St. Dec. 30.**

# Spirited student will carry torch

*Athletics not strong suit, but helping others is*

**BY LAURIE WATT**  
STAFF

She's in her "victory" lap at Barrie Central and she's far from athletic – but Caresse Ley, 18, will be the one to take the Olympic flame from City Hall on its way out of the city.

With plans to attend Carleton University in Ottawa for journalism next year, Ley is one of those teens who quietly does what needs to be done to make her school and her community better places to be.

"I'll be walking the torch, not running. I do not run," she said of her Dec. 30 morning carry along Collier Street. "All the people at my school will be so surprised. I'm the last person they'll be expecting (to be a torchbearer)."

But in looking for torchbearers, RBC looks for community-spirited souls.

And that is definitely what Ley is. She has volunteered at Molson Park Halloween events. She is president of Barrie Central's classics club and is editor of the fledgling school newspaper.

She has served on the Barrie Public Library's teen advisory board. She is helping with the city's Historic Neighbourhoods Strategy community task force – something that her mother got her involved in.

*"You're carrying the one thing that unites countries."*

CARESSE LEY

"At the time I was chair of the teen advisory board, I had an idea for a proposal that's going through the HNS. We wanted to do murals on walls, to clean them up a bit. It encourages good expression of art, as opposed to graffiti and it involves youth," she said.

Including youth in the community

is a passion for Ley. She has worked to give younger readers a voice at the library and has helped plan events there.

As the classics club president at Central, she has poured hours into working with others to present events for graduates and for Grade 9s. She has also worked on the school's semi-formal and a variety of fundraisers. She has represented Central at provincial conferences as well.

Yet she's not one to hail her contribution, because they are how a more-inclusive, better community is built.

She applied to be a torchbearer because she was curious and interested. She never expected to be chosen.

"It really hasn't hit me. It's a pretty big thing to comprehend. You're carrying the one thing that unites countries," she said.

Ley will take the flame from City Hall at 8:17 a.m. Dec. 30 along Collier Street, as it begins its journey out of town.