

SPORTS & LEISURE

Christie in Botswana on fact-finding mission

By **EAMONN MAHER**
Staff Writer

When the African country of Botswana's athletes march into the opening ceremonies for the Commonwealth Games in October, Terra Cotta resident Candace Christie will be a proud spectator.

The 23-year-old Georgetown Fall Fair Ambassador in 2005 recently arrived in Botswana to begin her one-year internship as a support staff team member of the Botswanan Olympic Committee, which was founded during the 1980s.

Christie will assist with administrative tasks such as fundraising, spreading awareness and communications for the team and continue to work with the program six months after the Games are complete to evaluate the progress of the athletes.

"Once I get there, I'll look at how the organization is being run from an outsider's perspective and use the tools I've been taught to assess things and see what can be improved," said the graduate of the University of Guelph's international development program.

"After graduating, I think it's important to get some practical experience in a developing country and from my time at camps, I've become really interested in what sport can do in people's lives. So it's perfect that I'll be there when they're preparing for the Games and I'll see all the different stages from when they go and when they come back, and then we'll do an evaluation and they'll also evaluate themselves."

Twice a provincial team gold medalist for Mayfield Secondary School in cross-country skiing, Christie has volunteered for charitable organizations such as World Vision and UNESCO, having spent time in France last year with the latter group. She also was an administrative volunteer this past December for the Right to Play in Toronto, editing coaching manuals, analyzing data and

Ex-Fall Fair Ambassador to help African team prepare for Commonwealth Games



Candace Christie of Terra Cotta, 23, recently left for the south African nation of Botswana to help that country's Olympic committee get ready for the 2010 Commonwealth Games in India in October. Christie is on a one-year internship along with five other Canadians who were selected to work with developing Commonwealth nations in just the second year of a newly established program.

performing secretarial duties.

Six Commonwealth Games internships have been granted by the Capacity Support Program, an initiative funded in part by Commonwealth Games Canada to help developing countries in Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean prepare

Photo by Eamonn Maher
for the 2010 Games, to be held Oct. 3-14 in New Delhi.

In an interview prior to departing, Christie said she wasn't sure how many athletes from Botswana will be on the team and on-line searches didn't turn up much on the BOC itself.

As part of her job description, Christie will be trained on a Commonwealth Games management software program called Zeus and implement it for the team, passing that knowledge on to a successor when she leaves.

"With Zeus, it ensures that all the proper procedures are followed, and people are sharing data and resources that can be used to organize the team for the Games," she added.

"Part of my job will be conducting workshops with athletes and coaches and there's talk of a long-term athletic development program, but I'll find out specifically when I get there."

Christie majored in rural and agricultural studies at Guelph and with her experience in international development, she's become interested in health care, specifically midwifery.

"I've always wanted to take a year to work in a developing country with the local people and just see what it's like for a foreigner to go into a community and try to implement programs and changes and see how they work. I think that's the biggest struggle with international development," she said.

Game time changed

There has been a time change for this week's fundraising hockey game between Georgetown's two high schools. Christ the King's Jaguars will take on the Georgetown District Rebels on Thursday starting at 6:15 p.m. at the Alcott B Arena in a matchup of junior boys' teams.

Organizers hope to fill the rink to its 500-person capacity, with proceeds going to the Heart & Stroke Foundation (CtK) and Earthquake Relief (GDHS).

Admission is \$2 per person. A 50/50 draw and silent auction will be conducted with a signed Detroit Red Wings' Johan Franzen jersey among the many items up for bidding.

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