



# Report from the Chair

sportalliance INFO



**Memo to:** Provincial Sport & Recreation Presidents and Executive Directors/Chief Operating Officers

**From:** Dr. Michael F. (Mike) Murphy  
Chair, *sportalliance* Board of Directors

**Re:** November 2008 "Update"

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In this Update, I comment on five items.

## 1. THE 2008 SAO AGM

The SAO celebrated an excellent year at its AGM on September 16, 2008! I applaud the Board and the staff for their commendable work over the past twelve months. Much was accomplished in this relatively short time: a revised strategic plan; an operational plan; a business plan; an excellent, thrilling comprehensive Games program; continued improvements to KidSport; and high membership satisfaction ratings, for example. A special debt of gratitude is owed to the 2007-8 Board: Doug Rosser (Past Chair), Shannon Cotnam, Adam Evans, Barbara Hoffmann, Stephen MacDonald (Secretary), Roger Robbins, David Saad, Holly Abraham (Vice-Chair), Carole Nickle (Treasurer), Ilene Watt (Vice-Chair), Jim Bradley (CEO), Janie Romoff and Anita Comella from the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sue Holloway (Ministerial Representative). All but one volunteer Board member will return for the 2008-9 year. We appreciate the contribution made by Shannon Cotnam, and we look forward to benefiting from the experience and expertise of our newest member, Janet Gates. The members of the Executive Committee for 2008-9 are Vice Chairs Holly Abraham and Carol Nickle, Treasurer Barbara Hoffmann, Secretary David Saad and Past Chair Doug Rosser.

At the AGM, I reminded the members that the SAO is now a member-run organization, one which they must continually reshape if it is to be relevant to them and if it is to help move Ontario sport ahead. After all, satisfaction with yesterday's progress is a recipe for mediocrity today. Therefore, we plan to give you a number of opportunities over the next year to participate in the process of revamping the SAO, with the biggest one, perhaps, taking place at the spring Sport Conference from March 27 to 29. Remember our vision is to be the pre-eminent leader in sport system development; and our mission is to empower, maximize and celebrate the Ontario sport system. Although we have made substantial progress in achieving these goals, much remains to be done. I look forward to working with you on the challenges ahead.

Also at the AGM, Treasurer Carol Nickle reported that the Board would investigate monthly telephone charges in the context of a thorough review of all policies and practices relating to SAO services. She estimated that such a report would take until January 2009. Since then, the matter has been discussed by the SAO Executive Committee and by the Board on October 27. Based on these discussions and a review of additional information on the subject (which was not readily available to the Board at the time of the AGM), the Board is currently examining two areas: an independent auditing firm will review the details of the

telephone expansion lease charges and report its findings to the Finance Committee, and an independent party with experience in the sport/recreation sector will report to the SAO Chair on the history and the context of the charges. After review by the Board, this information will be made available to clients and to members in due course as Carol reported.

## 2. **SAO MOVE** (Here is a quick update from Doug Rosser)

Preparations continue to move along with respect to our upcoming relocation to Concorde Gate. As we announced several months ago, the move timeframe was confirmed as the last 5 days of November and that is still our target. The tender has been awarded to a moving company – Tippet Richardson – and they are working out the logistical details for which offices will move first. It is quite likely that we will move Medallion Press and the Mailroom first, so that they have time to set up and be ready for clients.

All organizations will receive detailed move instructions the week of November 1<sup>st</sup>. Preliminary details concerning timing, access to moving boxes, etc. was provided at the General Information Session held on Thursday, October 30<sup>th</sup>.

Also, at the October 30<sup>th</sup> meeting, our voice and data consultants provide an “in-depth” explanation of the technical details and costs related to our new phone system as well as the data platform. As committed earlier, we were able to meet our objective of providing the new phone system to you at, or below, the cost that is currently being charged. We have based all financial calculations on the existing level of service usage; so we sincerely hope that everyone will continue to take full advantage of the common technology, thereby helping keep the costs lower for everyone. Also, an announcement will be forthcoming shortly concerning the schedule for staff training for the phone system – this training will be conducted onsite at the new facility.

Following discussions with the new landlord, we have not yet been able to finalize the design of internal signage. We do hope to deal with this over the next several weeks.

Lore Dehmel recently circulated a document explaining the costs related to internal window blinds for those internal office windows that you may have requested in your new space. I would encourage you to attend to this sooner than later if you would like to have everything ready upon your arrival.

Finally, just a reminder that with less than a month to go, you should be accelerating your efforts to get as much unwanted items removed from your offices as possible. Please use the appropriate disposal bins located at the shipping docks. Thanks for your cooperation.

## 3. **SPORT CONFERENCE**

The SAO, with the support of the PSOC, is working together to present a major provincial sport conference in the spring of 2009. The event will be held in conjunction with the Provincial Sport Awards which are taking place on Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup> at the Westin Bristol Place Hotel near the Airport in Toronto. Since the conference will take place on the following Friday, Saturday and Sunday (March 27 to March 29), it will be a great time to celebrate and reshape our sport system. Currently, we are lining up excellent keynote speakers. Also, we have confirmed that David Peterson will attend one of the sessions to discuss the upcoming Pan Am Games Bid. Please mark the date in your calendars, and as more information is available we will pass on the exciting news.

#### 4. **HAPPENINGS OF NOTE**

- KidSport Ontario recently was joined by Kathleen Wynn Minister of Education to announce a new Trillium Foundation grant in the amount of \$265,000 to support the development of KidSport chapters in Toronto over the next 4 years. This development will be a major thrust forward in the KidSport Program.
- The Sport Is Development Fund is receiving renewed interest. More organizations are using it to raise funds for worthwhile undertakings across the province. The availability of tax receipts through the fund's RCAA status has certainly increased donations to sport projects. Edmond Lo will assist organizations that wish to explore use of the fund.
- The Canada Summer Games in PEI are coming up fast and preparations for Ontario's participation is moving along well. Sports are using development grants to help prepare the teams; and the mission staff, under the capable leadership of Blair McIntosh, is working hard to support the teams' development.
- As noted above, the Ontario Sport Awards Banquet will take place one month earlier than in previous years. It will be held on March 26, 2009. The nomination forms will be out by the first week of November with a deadline of December 19<sup>th</sup>. With the shortened time frame, it is imperative that all nominations are submitted by the deadline so they can be fully reviewed. With the retirement of Herb Gray, Ashley Haynes is taking over responsibility for this important program.
- The Prime Minister has just appointed Gary Lunn as Minister of State for Sport. This will bring together the various sporting elements (including Vancouver 2010) under one Minister with a seat at the cabinet table. It is also notable that Minister Lunn has been appointed to the Cabinet Committee on Social Affairs and to the Treasury Board.

#### 5. **WELCOME TO:**



Since many of you know Janet Gates, or attended the AGM and read her bio, I will only make a brief comment here about her long and distinguished history in sport. Janet has served as Coordinator of the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation's Athlete Assistance Program and Ontario's Best, the province's radio and TV programs featuring amateur sport; as Manger, Community Initiatives, Ontario's Best Ever Program; and as Director General of the Canadian Wheelchair Sports. Janet has also Chaired several sport and tourism organizations including Cross Country Ontario, Freestyle Ontario, Cross Country Ski Areas Association and Ontario's Lake Country. For the past eight years, she has worked for the Ontario Government in various positions with the Ministry of Tourism, with the Ministry of Finance and currently with the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade as a Manager in the Economic Development Policy Branch. An international official with cross country skiing, Janet currently Chairs Cross Country Canada's Events Committee in the lead up to the

2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games and is Vice Chair of the Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance. She is a passionate sport tourism advocate, facilitating the

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development of the industry's 2005 Ontario Sport Tourism Action Plan and the 2010 Canadian Tourism Strategy. This interest in sporting events also includes a long history of event organization, covering the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympic Games, three Blackcomb Freestyle World Cups, the 1995 Thunder Bay World Nordic Games, Competition Chair of the 1991 Hardwood Hills World Cup, mountain biking's largest national championships and over 50 ski and cycling events a year at Hardwood Hills.

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If I can provide clarification on any matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at 519-686-4507 or call our CEO, Jim Bradley, at (416) 426-7074. Also for your information, I will travel from London (my home) to an office in the SAO headquarters on the first Monday and the second Wednesday in each month. I expect to work there from about 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. My email address is [murphy@sympatico.ca](mailto:murphy@sympatico.ca).