

UNITED STATES CURLING ASSOCIATION
Board of Directors Meeting
April 21 - 22, 2012
Hilton Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport MOA

MINUTES

Present: Chris Sjue, in the Chair; Paul Badgero, Kent Beadle, Maureen Clark, Gabrielle Coleman, Dean Gemmell, Nancy Hagenmiller, Peggy Hatch, Jonathan Havercroft, Cyndee Johnson, Gwen Krailo, Jan Legacie, Rich Lepping, Gordon Maclean, Richard Maskel, Bob Pelletier, James Pleasants, Leland Rich, Sean Silver, Ann Swisshelm, Beau Welling, Sam Williams

Also Present: Rick Patzke, COO; Derek Brown, Director of High Performance; Terry Kolesar, Director of Communications; Dawn Leurquin, Event Services Manager; Kim Nawyn, Growth & Development Manager; Sandy Robinson, Controller; Albert M. Anderson, WCF Director of Finance; Jack Bernauer, Chair of Finance-Audit Committee

Absent: Board: Craig Brown, David Carlson, Lynita Delaney, Janet Farr, Jerome Larson, Allison Pottinger, Mark Swandby. **Staff:** Scott Higgins, Director of Coaching and Sport Education; Christy Hering, Administrative Assistant

- I. Call to order.** (Sjue) President Sjue calls the meeting to order at **1:17p.m.**
- II. Welcome and introductions.** (Sjue) President Sjue welcomes everyone to the meeting.
 - A. Introductions:
 1. New USWCA Liaison Jennifer Stannard
 2. David Flippo, Alaska Curling Association President
 3. Carl Thomas, Grand National Curling Club of America, Inc. (GNCC), President
 4. Jeff Hannon, new GNCC representative
 - B. President Sjue asks all attendees to introduce themselves.
- III. Roll call.** (Pelletier) Secretary Bob Pelletier takes the roll and confirms that a quorum is present.
- IV. Appoint parliamentarian.** (Sjue) President Sjue appoints Andy Anderson as parliamentarian.
- V. Additions/changes to the printed agenda.** (Sjue)
 - A. President Sjue adds a presentation on the Men's Scottish Tour by Rich Lepping to the Miscellaneous Items section of the agenda.
- VI. Approve Minutes of Previous Board Meetings** (Sjue)
 - A. September 10-11, 2011

B. Badgero moves/Pleasants seconds approval of the minutes of the September 10-11, 2011, Board of Directors meeting. Motion approved.

VII. Ratify the actions taken by the Executive Committee (Sjue)

A. October 13-18, 2011

B. February 27-29, 2012

C. Beadle moves/Krailo seconds ratification of the actions taken by the Executive Committee at their meetings of October 13-18, 2011, and February 27-29, 2012.

Motion approved.

VIII. Nominating Committee (Rich)

A. Rich reports and presents nominations. *[see Appendix: Slate of Nominations]*

B.

1. For President – Jim Pleasants. Rich calls for nominations from the floor three times. There are none. Pelletier moves/Lepping seconds that nominations be closed.

Motion approved.

2. For four Vice Presidents – Beadle / Carlson / Krailo / Williams. Rich notes that the incoming president will determine which vice presidential roles each person is to serve. Rich calls for nominations from the floor three times. There are none. Pelletier moves/Badgero seconds that nominations be closed. Motion approved.

3. Treasurer – Silver. Rich calls for nominations from the floor three times. There are none. Lepping moves/Maclean seconds that nominations be closed. Motion approved.

4. Secretary – Havercroft. Rich calls for nominations from the floor three times. There are none. Krailo moves/Badgero seconds that nominations be closed. Motion approved.

5. Board-elected Directors – Welling and Beadle. Rich calls for nominations from the floor three times. There are none. Badgero moves/Krailo seconds that nominations be closed. Motion approved.

6. Nominating Committee – Bill Forsythe. Rich notes that the Nominating Committee includes the most recent two past-presidents and that Chris Sjue will replace Mark Swandby on the committee. In addition, two people are elected by Board. Bill Forsythe is up for re-election, and the Committee nominates Forsythe. Rich calls for nominations from the floor three times. There are none. Pelletier moves/Badgero seconds that nominations be closed. Motion approved.

7. World Curling Federation Representatives – Welling and Rich. Rich calls for nominations from the floor three times. There are none. Krailo moves/Mclean seconds that nominations be closed. Motion approved.

8. Rich notes that there are no contested offices. Johnson moves/Swisshelm seconds that a unanimous ballot be cast in favor of the slate of nominations. Motion approved with one opposed.

IX. Miscellaneous Items (Sjue)

A. Lepping – Men's Scottish Tour report. Lepping presents a plaque with team pins to Sjue and Patzke, to be displayed in the USA Curling office. Lepping notes that team USA played exceptionally well and won the Herries Maxwell Trophy. Lepping expresses appreciation

for the support of the USCA and notes that the team had a great time. Lepping points out that the team can be seen and heard singing on YouTube.

X. Finance Committee (Bernauer)

A. Bernauer reports that Finance Committee met on April 19.

B. The Committee reviewed the annual external CPA audit. Treasurer Silver will go through detail.

C. The Committee reviewed audit by USOC of fiscal years 2009-10 and 2010-11. Treasurer Silver will review that audit.

D. The Committee reviewed the year-to-date financial reports, including assets and liabilities.

1. The Committee reviewed accounts receivable and will be writing off approximately \$750 worth of debt.

2. The Committee reviewed the cash balance and finds it to be sufficient.

3. The Committee reviewed the Operating Statement, comparing the budget to our FY2010-11 Audit Report.

4. Bernauer reports that most clubs have paid their dues, but an estimated \$18,000 is not yet collected.

5. The Committee reviewed the 2007 and 2010 WCF Stone program stones. Clubs are up-to-date on their payments. The USCA has seven sets of stones in inventory. These are available for distribution to clubs wishing to purchase stones.

6. Bernauer notes that the Annual Appeal program that replaced the Pin Donation Program and that Silver will present information about the Annual Appeal in the Treasurer's report.

7. Bernauer indicates that the Finance-Audit Committee is recommending a small dues increase of approximately \$1.00 for most dues categories. He notes that the USCA's practice has been to increase dues a small amount every other year. In 2010-2011 we didn't have an increase, so 2012-13 will be the year we would normally have one.

8. Bernauer reports on the USCA's current bank Line of Credit (LOC) of \$50,000. The USCA discovered that a former Board member's personal guaranty is associated with the LOC. **Silver moves/Pelletier seconds that the USCA negotiate for a new line of credit that will not require a personal guaranty and dissolve the existing line of credit.** Silver notes that the Committee thinks it is feasible to find a bank that would offer a \$50,000-\$100,000 LOC and that it is prudent to do so. There was no further discussion. **Motion approved.** Silver thanks the individual whose personal guaranty is associated with the current LOC.

9. Bernauer reports on the status of the Evergreen Curling Club construction loan. Because Evergreen ran into lease and equipment issues, they will be revising their proposal and returning to the Board with a request in a few months.

10. Bernauer recognizes Potomac for paying off its construction loan. Pelletier and Potomac President Drummie were congratulated.

11. General discussion about WCF construction loans. Rich notes the strong support of the WCF for the USCA. Anderson notes that the WCF makes loan to NGBs, and that plans must be submitted to the WCF for review before any construction begins.

Anderson indicates that his opinion is that the WCF would not provide a loan for construction of a club that is located nearby an existing club. However, if a second club

were somewhere in a market where construction will grow the sport, the WCF would consider that more favorably. He indicates that a club that has burned down is a gray area for construction funds. Silver notes that we may get an application from Coyotes Curling. Silver indicates that, from a USCA perspective, applications are taken on a first-come, first-served basis. He reports that one of the reasons we don't see a great number of clubs applying is that the construction loan program fits a very specific purpose. While the loan is interest-free, there are technical and financial challenges that a club must meet. Clubs need a white knight willing to protect against risk to the USCA by providing liquid assets as collateral.

XI. Treasurer's Report (Silver)

- A. Silver notes that the Treasurer's report is in the Directors' Drop Box and includes:
1. 2010-2011 CPA audit.
 2. 2009-2011 USOC audit. Silver notes that the Finance-Audit Committee had a working review of the audit during their meeting.
 3. Condensed budget vs. actual report for 2011-2012.
- B. Treasurer Silver reviews the results of the USCA's annual external CPA audit. He reports that our final results as audited were consistent with the preliminary results reviewed at the fall board meeting. He notes that the USCA's annual report was posted online. He reports that the USCA has had positive earnings for the last three years. From a balance sheet perspective the USCA is in a sound financial position. Last year we had a 22% increase in dues collected, which was 100% tied to exposure related to the Olympics and the fact that our clubs took advantage of that exposure. A 2010-11 negative was a decrease in USOC funding. Silver notes that in 2011-12 the USOC increased funding. Silver indicates that the USCA received a very clean audit, with no material weaknesses. He notes that control issues were typical for organizations of this size, and had to do with segregation of duties. The audit is as clean as possible.
- C. *Question* related to dues: Will the recommended \$1.00 dues increase be across all categories? *Response by Silver:* Silver indicates that the Budget Committee will work out the details. Badgero notes that the sooner Directors can get the word out, the better, so that clubs can plan. Silver indicates that the Committee's recommendation is the early notice, and that Board members should take this message to their clubs. Williams suggests that we prepare our clubs for the "worst case" of \$1.00 across the board.
- D. Treasurer Silver reviews the USOC audit of 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. The audit field work was completed in the fall of 2011. The USOC has confirmed that the USCA has materially complied with the requirements of the grant, and made four recommendations. Three of the four are minor, low-risk recommendations. All of the recommendations are in the audit report posted in the Directors' Drop Box. Silver notes that the USOC provided very helpful, positive feedback. The one issue that requires more immediate attention is that we need to make sure we're in compliance the IRS regulations. We had 10 recommendations last audit. We complied with eight. Of the other two, one was related to getting signatures on contracts. The other comment that we did not address is the recommendation that we change our governance structure and reduce the size of the board. Obviously this is not a new issue. Governance was highlighted as a way to improve in the organization in the recent audit as well.

E. Silver reviews the interim financial results year-to-date (nine months) for 2011-2012. He notes that we originally planned for a break-even budget for this fiscal year. At the time of budget development the Budget Committee felt that any downsized risk could be handled by the positive variances over the past three years. It is almost impossible to gauge where we will be on June 30 because of the way our cash and expenses flow. We don't know exactly where we will be at year-end. Silver's expectation is that we are on track for basically a break-even year. He reviews the negative and positive budget variances.

1. Negative. Dues revenue is lower than projected. The Budget Committee had considerable discussion related to the increase that was projected. Based upon all current projections, we'll end with dues totaling around \$420,000 – a \$40,000 shortfall. The basic reason is that membership declined. Silver notes that it was a modest decline after 22% growth in the prior year. The challenge as we budget for the next fiscal year is determining what, if any, growth to project.

Discussion: Board members discuss how Directors can help with roster reporting and dues collection. Directors, regional treasurers, and regional presidents are copied on the membership roster/dues packet that goes to clubs in the fall (exception is GNCC, which sends packets to their clubs and collects USCA dues, per their bylaws). Silver notes that he will become involved after the January 31 roster/dues deadline in 2013-2014.

2. Positives:

a) USOC favorably viewed our Annual Appeal approach to fund raising, and approved a \$50,000 Challenge Grant through 12/31/12. For FY2011-2012 we expect to receive \$25,000-\$30,000 from the Challenge Grant.

b) The Philadelphia Nationals very successful – they made \$90,000 on the event. 10% comes back to the USCA: \$9,000 revenue. Silver notes that this is a milestone for the USCA. Patzke provides information about other Nationals host sites' experiences with the event and revenue generation.

c) Some expense categories are tracking below budget.

3. Silver notes that the year is far from over, but he is hopeful that we will have most of the year-end information soon after June 30.

4. Silver notes that the balance sheet shows the USCA is in a good financial position. We fully expected our cash position to stay static. Last year we received proceeds for sensor handle insurance in FY11, with expense in FY12. Silver notes the carryover of USOC funding from 2010-2011 to 2011-2012.

F. Recap of budgeted income.

1. Silver indicates we show \$1,547,000 projected revenue

a) He notes that much of the revenue is tied to USOC/Olympic programming, indicating that \$1,000,000 is directly or indirectly as a result of our being an Olympic sport.

b) Dues comprise 30% of the USCA's income.

c) Silver notes that how we spend the revenue matches up with where we get the money – except that \$150,000 is USOC revenue that supports general operations, and is over and above the other funding they provide

(1) Silver illustrates how the USOC supports our organization: Content licensing, Challenge Grant, Staff Support, plus \$9,000 for Nationals webcast (a member service).

- G. Silver notes that he is pleased with Annual Appeal results to date.
- H. The USCA has no new sponsors. We didn't budget for sponsorship this year.
- I. Long-term challenges
 - 1. Uncertain level of USOC funding. The USOC is a major client.
 - 2. The USCA may need to budget for flat dues growth until 2014 Winter Games.
- J. Opportunities
 - 1. Refocused Member Services and a Growth & Development strategic plan.
 - 2. Creative solicitation of new sponsors.
 - 3. Expanded fund-raising efforts.

XII. COO Report (Patzke)

- A. Patzke notes that his COO report is in the Directors' Drop Box.
- B. Patzke indicates that the key to the success of our National Championships were the ice arena staff and the Philadelphia Sports Congress.
- C. Patzke reports on PSA, which provides event manager support to the USCA. He introduces PSA's Mark Vanis, noting that Mark made all the hotel arrangements for the spring Board meeting. PSA doesn't make money on this event. They make money on hotel rebates, and then kick a percent back to the host committee. PSA's services do not cost the USCA anything – and we get money back. Patzke expresses appreciation for PSA's help and support.
- D. Patzke reports on plans for the next Olympic Trials. We have tentative plans in place for television coverage on the NBC Sports Channel. Coverage will be a combination of live TV and taped if we don't go to a third day.
- E. Patzke reports that the Super Bowl Village promotion was a success. Patzke introduces a video showing the "Street Curling" system used in the Village. He notes that there was a constant line of people waiting to try curling. They used 25-pound rocks with ball-bearings. The event generated a lot of interest. Patzke notes that the NFL wouldn't allow us to sell merchandise or have a donation jar. We estimate 10,000 people participated. Curling was stationed right beneath a zip-line. It was a super experience! The USCA doesn't own the Street Curling system we used. We have a good relationship with Chad McMullan, the business's owner – they are willing to sell it. The USCA is going to do some fund-raising events with NHL teams, and they're talking about bringing Street Curling into the building a few months in advance. The system is portable and has a lot of potential.

XIII. Governance Task Force (Sjue)

- A. Sjue reports that the intent of the Governance Task Force is to continue to work to develop a proposal that can be supported by the membership. He indicates that the comments and recommendations made last night during an open discussion will be taken into consideration. Sjue notes that everyone needs to understand that everyone will have to give on their positions. He asks that everyone please give their attention to proposals when they are made so that we can take care of this sooner rather than later.

XIV. Election Confirmation. (Anderson) In response to a question about whether the elections held earlier in the meeting were valid, parliamentarian Anderson reads the section from Roberts Rules of Order related to elections. Because the motion to approve by acclamation was approved and seconded, per Roberts Rules, the elections are completed.

XV. Competitive Programs (Beadle) [see Appendix: Competitive Programs Report]

- A. Beadle notes that his report is in Directors' Drop Box.
- B. One year ago we hired our first Director of High Performance (DHP), Derek Brown. Highlights of past year include:

1. Project 2018 coaches. Project 2018 teams were coached by John Benton (Women's) and Phill Drobnick (Men's). Beadle notes that the Stephen Dropkin rink had a terrific performance at the Junior Nationals. The Corey Dropkin rink won a bronze medal in the Youth Olympic Games Mixed Doubles, during which Corey competed with a young lady from Russia.
2. Project 2018 women's teams. The Solem and Hamilton rinks took silver and bronze medals respectively at the Junior Nationals. Beadle notes that the Junior Women's Championship was won by a very young team, the Christensen rink from Duluth. They have strong potential.
3. *Question*: How are teams identified? *Response* by Beadle: The Director of High Performance convened an advisory committee to review teams and make a selection. This is an on-going process. The DHP has observed a number of teams in a variety of events. The selection process is heavily determined by performance. The 2018 teams were the highest performing junior teams who were fully eligible.
4. Men's and Women's High Performance Program (HPP) teams.
 - a) MEN.
 - (1) The Pete Fenson rink won silver at Nationals. The Pete Fenson and Heath McCormick rinks have qualified for Olympic Trials in 2013.
 - (2) The Heath McCormick rink won our 2012 Nationals and is now part of the High Performance Program. The team Men's Team received five points toward Olympic qualification (8th place finish).
 - (3) The Tyler George rink was also in HPP. Beadle notes that theirs was probably the most consistent team on World Curling Tour (WCT). The Pete Fenson rink has highest rank in the WCT of our funded teams, with the George rink being second.
 - (4) *Question*: With the McCormick rink being added to the HPP, will a team that didn't perform well be dropped? *Response* by Beadle: The Advisory Committee will look at this, but some decisions will be affected by the amount of money we receive from the USOC.
 - b) WOMEN.
 - (1) The Women's HPP teams were the Patti Lank and Erika Brown rinks. Erika Brown's team will receive USOC incentive funding based on performance at Sun Life Cash Spiel. Both Lank and Brown teams participated in the Great Lakes Curling Tour and had success there. Neither team had as positive a National Championship as anticipated.
 - (2) The Women's National was won by the Allison Pottinger rink. At Worlds the team finished in fifth place, which garnered eight points toward Olympic qualification. Beadle notes that the 2013 Women's World Team USA will need to finish in the top seven to guarantee a spot in the Olympics. If we aren't in that top seven, there will be an Olympic Qualifier in December 2013.

(3) The Pottinger and Cassie Potter rink (silver at Nationals) receive an entry to the Olympic Trials and will be part of the HPP.

C. Sport Education.

1. This past year the USCA published the *5 Elements of Curling Technique*. We initially printed 250 copies – and sold out. We printed 250 more and are up to about 420 copies sold. The manual is also being sold as an e-book. A second manual, the *5 Elements of Shot-Making*, is currently being developed. This manual will be written in conjunction with Rodger Schmidt, who provided technical expertise for the first volume.

2. An Advisory group, drawn primarily from the coaching community, was charged with three tasks:

- a) Develop a standardized model for training and certifying coaches
- b) Create and deliver program awareness
- c) Develop methods to augment and improve coaching development

D. Beadle reports that nominations for Coach of the Year and Developmental Coach of the Year are due to the USCA office by May 15.

E. Beadle notes that the 2012 Wheelchair Curling Team USA was formed with several new players. At Worlds they finished fifth – a good start for a newly-formed team.

F. Beadle reports that the USCA's High Performance Plan and resource request is due to USOC May 1.

1. Derek Brown and High Performance Advisory Group have had a chance to review the plan and provide feedback.

2. Our resource request for 2012-2013 includes additional funds to bring a National Women's Coach on board, and to provide additional resources for team coaches and other program enhancements.

G. Director of High Performance (DHP) Derek Brown reports.

1. Brown thanks the Advisory Group personnel, including Beadle, AAC members and the coaches who have been involved in the program (Benton, Drobnick, Baird). The team coaches who've been working with our HPP teams have been spending their own money – so we're asking the USOC for funding to offer support for them as well.

2. Brown expresses excitement about the outstanding group of athletes we have. He notes that has been a pleasure to work with these teams.

3. AAC President Ann Swisshelm offers comments from an athlete's perspective. She has participated in each National event since 1995, and has been involved in the majority of support offered to athletes. She notes that this past year was a year that provided real connection to athletes' training and competing from their practice. She indicates that the High Performance Program gave athletes the ability to apply real facts in real time – access to the kind of tools that will help us win an Olympic Gold medal. She added that it will be great for the younger athletes in the 2018 Program to have access to this support so early in their career.

H. World Team Preparation. Beadle notes that when our athletes win a National Championship, they require World Team Support. Legacie reports on the World Team Prep (WTP) Committee meeting.

1. The WTP committee is exploring options for new ties for men's teams, and scarves for women's.

2. Legacie expresses appreciation to those who assisted with World Team Prep in 2011-2012, including: the people who ran the team meetings after events: Williams – Mixed Doubles; Carlson – Senior Men; Sjue – Senior Women; USCA staff; our High Performance staff.
3. Legacie reports that Maureen Clark has offered to assist the home office with volunteer work in the area of WTP.
4. Legacie reviews the championship event schedule for 2011-2012, noting that the Women’s Worlds will be in Latvia; Men’s Worlds in Victoria, B.C.; Junior Worlds in Sochi, Russia; World Seniors in Canada; Wheelchair Worlds in Sochi, Russia; Winter World Universiade (WWUGs) in Italy. Legacie also reports on National event sites that are known at this time.

I. *Question:* Will new Project 2018 teams be identified each year? *Response* by DHP Derek Brown: The program is an annual process. There is no automatic qualification. Beadle notes that Project 2018 isn’t just a junior program. He indicates that we have WWUGs coming up – and the age group for WWUGs goes up to age 28. Beadle notes that the WWUGs is a significant high performance opportunity, and is a great opportunity to increase the experience of our athletes. Project 2018 coach Benton notes that one question that has arisen relates to what happens to a team as they age out of juniors. The Advisory Group wants to be sure to keep the young curlers engaged as they move into college age.

J. *Question:* Are we going to put in a bid to host the Olympic Challenge Round? *Response* by Patzke: The USCA is interested in hosting the Olympic Challenge Round. Patzke has distributed the event bid information to some clubs. He views it as a curling club event rather than an arena event.

K. Marketing and Operations (Carlson) *[see Appendix: VP Operations] [see Appendix: Director of Communications Report]*

L. By-laws. Carlson was unable to attend, as he was competing at the Senior Men’s World Championship. There are no proposals related to by-laws.

M. Human Resources. Human Resources did not meet; committee chair Mark Swandby was also competing at Senior Men’s Worlds. There is no HR report.

N. Athlete-Curler Recognition. (Maskel)

1. Maskel solicits Hall of Fame nominations. He reviews the four nomination categories:

- a) Curler
- b) Builder
- c) Curler/Builder
- d) Team

2. Currently the committee has few nominations on file. There is a one-page nomination form available online at the “Inside the USCA” section of our website; nominations are to be submitted with appropriate supporting material. Candidates brought forward will be voted on at the Fall Board meeting.

O. Revenue Development (Silver)

1. Silver provides an update on the Annual Appeal.
 - a) Silver notes that this was a brainstorming idea of the Revenue Development Committee several years ago.

- b) He praises the project as a great example of collaboration between committee members, staff, and outside expertise. Silver recognizes the contributions of Peggy and Denny Hatch, and of Ann Garber.
 - c) Silver notes that the Annual Appeal didn't require involvement of a lot of people. A core group of five or six people was able to develop and implement the Appeal.
 - d) Results to-date: the budget was \$17,500 – and we're over \$18,000.
 - e) Silver thanks the Board for their support, noting that 100% of Board members at the Board meeting have contributed. All staff have contributed.
 - f) Silver reviews the Annual Appeal process: The Committee developed a direct mail piece that was sent to all curling households. Silver reports that he heard very positive feedback from Central Office. A follow-up mailing was sent to group who had contributed in past years, but hadn't responded to the Appeal. The next step is an email campaign to everyone who hasn't donated for whom we have an email address; the email will contain an online donation link. We will leverage the USOC Challenge Grant in our email.
 - g) Silver notes that this first Annual Appeal was an experiment, and we can build off of this first phase. The Committee is asking questions and making note of responses. Should we target arena club members differently? They like our link to the Olympics. An approach to older clubs may focus on our revamping the Member Services program.
 - h) *Question:* Have we met the target response percentage? *Response* by Silver: We don't have that information yet, but we do know that the cost of the appeal vs. the income generated was good. The USOC is looking at \$.50 for every dollar spent, and we are less than that.
 - i) Hatch notes that we have a membership database, but not a donor database. She indicates that we need to work with a database software platform that will provide us with information we can use to analyze donations. She notes that the USOC has been very helpful in making recommendations with regard to database platforms. Hatch asks: Are there Directors with expertise in this area who would like to help us explore database software? Please let Peggy know. Hatch notes that once the database is set up and we can contact donors we know have given in the past but haven't yet, and that we may ask Directors for assistance in this area.
 - j) Silver notes that a goal is also to tie this into our website as we develop our prospects – and to have this up and running before Sochi, so that anyone who comes to our website has an opportunity to donate. Silver also notes that an intangible benefit is that the annual appeal sends a message to each household about the things that we are doing.
2. Planned Giving (Lepping). Lepping reports that the Planned Giving Committee has consulted with two outside paid groups and the USOC. He notes that the component the USCA is missing is the basin to put these dollars and commitments in. We're working with the ACF&M as a possible basin; it is a 501(c)(3). Lepping and Anderson met with the ACF&M and think we are close to reaching a conclusion. The Committee has identified eight people who have an interest in planned giving. The first Planned Giving mailing is anticipated to go out this fall. Lepping reiterates the need to have a donor database in place. He indicates that we can use the donor database to

individualize our approach to secure annual gifts of \$100 and more. Lepping notes that the USCA will not be hiring an outside group to run the program. He reports that the USOC advises that we continue on the track we're following, do a soft approach, and use the Annual Appeal as a base.

3. Chicago Community Trust. Silver reports that The Trust administers money that has been left as part of a will or estate. An individual from Chicago, Dar Curtis, left money that was to be used to support grassroots curling, this is money set aside for the long-term benefit to curling in the United States. The Trust has asked the USCA to consider helping them administer the curling grants. Silver sees this as a tremendous member services opportunity, noting that we can offer grants to our members. The Trust will continue to hold the cash and manage the investment, and will tell us each year how much money we have to distribute. This would be a business arrangement. The Trust would have oversight. We will have a formal proposal to the Trust by May 1. The Dar Curtis Fund set aside money for the long-term benefit of curling in the United States. Silver notes that the Canadian Curling Association (CCA) has a similar program (\$250,000 to distribute to worthy curling causes).

P. Silver notes that we have several committees working somewhat independently on revenue development. He indicates the committees will want to meet with President to discuss synchronizing their efforts.

XVI. Championships (Pleasants)

The Championships Committee held a four-hour meeting. Pleasants reports on the highlights.

A. Site selection *[see Appendix: Site Selection Calendar]*

1. Pleasants reports that the Committee has a plan to systematize site selection, using a team of staff and committee members. USCA Administrative Assistant Hering has been working on a letter to clubs explaining which events are available for hosting opportunities, and what is involved in hosting an event. AAC Board Member Gemmill has developed a presentation that will be posted on our website; it addresses why a club would want to host an event. *[see Appendix: Host Site Document]* Sites will have a bid deadline for hosting.

2. Pleasants reports that we are still looking for sites for Mixed Doubles and Mixed, and possibly the Midwest Nationals Qualifiers.

B. Online registration system. *[see Appendix: Event Services Manager Report]* Pleasants reports event signups worked well. Suggestions for improvement included the addition of an incentive for early registration (a surtax on procrastination). The incentive will be \$10 per person. *Question:* How will we let people know about this? *Response:* Stone Soup e-newsletter, USCA website, Championship Rules.

C. Winter World Universiade. Pleasants indicates that the Championship Committee determined that the WWUGs event falls under the auspices of the High Performance Program. He notes that if we are requesting USOC funding for our participation, it will need to be within the HPP. We will work with High Performance to (a) produce quality teams and (b) help us avoid losing funds (paid in advance) due to nonparticipation (\$5,000 per team has to be provided the summer before the event).

D. Seniors. Fairbanks has an interest in hosting Senior Men's and Women's as a concurrent event. The site has six sheets. An earlier deadline for the event was requested because flights have to be arranged for most participants.

E. Field of Play. Pleasants notes that the ice quality in Philadelphia for the Nationals was excellent. Potomac Curling Club requested icemaking assistance for the Regional Qualifier they hosted, and the USCA provided assistance in the person of Dave Martin. The Committee voted to send an icemaker to Club Nationals, using some of the event registration fees to support that.

F. Length of events. The Committee considered decreasing the length of certain events – Mixed and Clubs – from 10 ends to eight. The Committee decided to defer a decision until they survey teams that participated in last year’s events. Pleasants notes that the Committee can use Survey Monkey to survey clubs. Pleasants and Williams noted that WCT events and other international, highly competitive events are eight ends.

G. Certification for icemakers. Icemaker Mark Shurek conducted an icemaking course. The USCA currently offers only Level 1 certification for icemakers. Pleasants notes that good ice supports competitive excellence, i.e., when athletes play on better ice, they’re better prepared to play in championship events. The Committee discussed developing a database on clubs’ capacity for hosting an event based on ice and rock conditions.

H. Officiating. Williams reports.

1. Melissa Fox advanced to Level 3 Official.
2. The USCA had several events where an official gave short notice of being unable to attend an event. Williams indicates that some athletes suggested that there be no officials at events. He notes that we used to refer to a “Head Official” in our rules, and we no longer do that. The Officiating Committee had a discussion about rules and why any of them deviate from those of the World Curling Federation (WCF). The USCA is in the process of developing next year’s Championship Rules book. One of our efforts will be to compare our rule book with the WCF’s. In some cases we have had specific reasons to deviate from the WCF rules, but Williams notes that the issue is worth reviewing.

I. Williams discusses specific technical rules issues

1. 5th-player rule. There are circumstances that arise where the Request for Ruling Committee is faced with very compelling requests related to adding a 5th player. Therefore, the Committee is adding a hardship clause to the Rules. Such hardships should be a rare occurrence. A committee will make a determination in each case.
2. Written refund policy. Lack of a written policy created confusion. The basic premise is that refunds will not be granted except in hardship cases.
3. Timing of playdowns for Club Nationals. This year two registration deadlines were used, but this affected fill policy. The first deadline date was used for determining the fill and one state lost its berth. Next year we will use the later date as the fill date.
4. Social members eligibility to play down in Championships. The USCA has a social membership dues category and a regular membership dues category. Confusion occurs when clubs have different club membership rules. The Committee agrees that to be eligible for Championship participation, an athlete has to pay regular USCA dues. The Committee will work on defining “regular USCA dues.” *Question:* Should the USCA have a social membership dues category? *Response by Anderson:* Anderson noted that there are clubs with social members who support their club and also want an affiliation with the USCA. Silver suggests that this issue be examined during the Budget Meeting.

5. 5th player rule for Club Nationals. Teams will be able to add a 5th player from another state if it doesn't change the region the team would represent had the 5th player signed up in advance of the entry deadline.

6. What are roles of committee and staff? The Committee resolved to work with staff to determine the best and most reasonable allocation of responsibility, and to determine how work can be guided by policy.

J. Arena Championship. Havercroft reports that the goal is to have an Arena Championship in spring of 2013 as a trial run. Gabrielle Coleman, Havercroft and USCA Growth & Development Manager Nawyn developed a survey to determine interest in the event; 54% responded. The idea is to start small, with 16 teams each for men and women. The Committee agreed to avoid setting dates already occupied, possibly in late May or early June. This is an off time for hockey, so the cost for ice time is lower. Twenty clubs have expressed an interest in hosting the event. The host would need to be a single rink, five-sheet facility.

K. USCA Ice Technician. Patzke introduces and recognizes the contributions of USCA Ice Technician David Staveteig.

L. Senior Men's Worlds. Pleasants notes that Ireland won it's first-ever world Championship at the Senior Men's Worlds.

XVII. Board Member Responsibility. Anderson reminded the Board that they have a fiduciary responsibility to support Board actions.

President Sjue adjourned the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m. until 8:30 a.m. on April 22.

President Sjue reconvened the meeting April 22, 2012 at 8:36 p.m.

XVIII. Roll Call (Pelletier) Secretary Pelletier takes the roll and indicates that a quorum is present.

XIX. Member Services (Maclean reports on behalf of Jerome Larson)

A. Maclean notes that Jerome Larson was unable to attend this meeting.

B. College Curling. Maclean notes that he has posted a report in the Drop Box. **[see Appendix: College Curling Report]**

1. Summary: The Illinois State Curling Association is hosting three events rather than a national championship. Maclean is re-starting the National event. It will be invitational. Schools will earn berths by sponsoring their own regional events (if large enough), or participating in the ISCA events. The University of Tennessee is hosting a regional event this summer. Third weekend in March the Tournament will be held in Duluth, Minn. Maclean is seeking funding for the event. He notes that a student in New England is organizing a conference of schools.

2. Question: Do all four players need to attend the same school? Response: The school is the entry, not the participants. The goal is to get more schools involved. You could have two strong teams from one school – they can bring as many players as they want and rotate them in and out. We'll see how this works.

3. Sjue recommends that Maclean provide a budget request to Nawyn so that there can be discussion of that request at the Budget Meeting.

C. Maclean notes that there was a secondary meeting after the Member Services Committee Meeting. The Member Services Committee wishes to express support of Nawyn as Growth & Development Manager, and looks forward to working with her.

D. Growth & Development: USCA G&D Manager Nawyn reports. *[see Appendix: Growth & Development Report]*:

1. Nawyn reports that the Growth and Development focus is on the clubs as customers. One of key goals is development of resources that can be used by regions to support clubs. Short-term goals to be completed within the next two years in preparation for the 2014 Olympics include:

a) **Improving existing certification programs:** The goal is to develop effective, high-quality programs which can be delivered with consistency throughout the country.

b) **Creating resources for emerging clubs:** Here the objective is to provide regions with the tools they need to more effectively promote grassroots curling. The focus is on the compilation of a practical, step-by-step guide geared towards groups and individuals looking to start curling clubs.

c) **Producing a guide for effective recruiting and retention practices:** While some of the more established clubs have solid recruiting and retention practices, many clubs still struggle in this area. Through research on existing practices, the goal is to develop a practical guide to let clubs know what's working and how such programs can be implemented. This resource can be used on both state/region and club levels and should build upon the information in the second target area (above).

d) **Developing a communications strategy for Member Services/Growth & Development:** Recognizing the current dissatisfaction members have expressed regarding the benefits offered to clubs, it's important to let our consumers know about our renewed focus, goals, and plans for the future. Thus, the goal is to develop a consistent message and a strategy about how to best reach our target audience.

2. Following the completion of the analysis of the Growth & Development Survey, an advisory group will be established to help determine longer-term goals and strategies. The survey will be used as a foundation for this planning. Nawyn notes that she is very happy to be with this organization, excited about the potential, and excited about working with the Member Services Committee members.

3. *Question:* How will you build communication into your plan as you reach out to clubs? *Response* by Nawyn: The details are to be worked out. The first goal is to communicate in the next *Curling News*. The Committee will talk over the summer about the best ways to communicate with clubs.

4. *Question:* Given the changing demographics of the curling community, how can we tap into social media, as it seems to be one of the best ways to approach the younger people? *Responses* by Kolesar and Nawyn: Kolesar notes that much of her day is spent in social media, including Facebook, Twitter, foursquare, YouTube. Nawyn provides an example of how Facebook helped to connect curlers in different parts of the country. USCA has 19,000 Facebook members.

5. *Question:* Are we providing a service to our clubs so that they, too, can take advantage of social media? *Response:* Silver notes that we are preparing clubs to take advantage of the 2014 Olympics, including development of a consistent, branded curling product for training and instruction, and strategies for retaining members.

Coleman notes that the USCA does a lot of great things for members, but we don't get much credit. We want to package things in a way that makes it clear what we're doing.

6. Nawyn notes that Chicago Curling Club will be working with her on a survey related to member retention at some point in the future.

7. Sjue encourages Directors to urge their clubs to complete the G&D Survey. He indicates that this is a way that we can get a lot of good data to use as we plan and implement programs. Sjue recommends that Directors also review the survey.

8. Maclean notes that the Committee questions whether the structure of the committee best serves the interest of the goals we are trying to reach.

XX. USOC (Patzke)

A. Patzke reports that the High Performance Program presentation to the USOC is scheduled for next Wednesday. The USOC will let us know by May 15 or thereabouts what our allocation will be.

B. At the last Olympic Assembly, NBC promised the International Olympic Committee (IOC) that they would have a youth sports initiative. They will have an Olympic gold map with each sport that will say, for example, "Contact USA Curling for more information." We need to plan in advance to be able to take advantage of the opportunity this affords.

C. Silver recommends that the USCA present our plan for continuing to address our governance issue to the USOC thoughtfully and positively. Sjue notes that the focus will be on the progress we've made and that we are continuing to work on this. Silver notes that one of the positives was our acknowledgement of AAC right to vote (by certifying their votes at the Annual Members Meeting).

D. USOC/AAC report (Maskel). Maskel reads his report. He indicates he is chairing a Task Force of athletes.

XXI. Athletes Advisory Council (Swisshelm)

A. Swisshelm reports that there was significant milestone reached this weekend by the Board's acknowledgement of the AAC right to vote at the Annual Members Meeting. Swisshelm thanks the Board, and recognizes Andy Anderson, who communicated with Swisshelm and supported the efforts to include the AAC in voting. The athletes who sit on the AAC are all members of curling clubs, are part of member services, are on boards for their clubs – AAC members are interested and can help the USCA. Our clubs are as important to us as our teams and competitive success.

B. AAC activities: The AAC's internal bylaws are going to be redone. The most major election that will be held this fall is for the USOC AAC rep and alternate. There will be a cross-over meeting April 2013. This time next year we'll have new four-year terms.

C. Athlete elections will be held soon.

D. The formalization of the athletes' right to vote is noted. Silver notes that the Bylaws cannot conflict with laws or statutes.

XXII. World Curling Federation (Anderson, Hatch, Rich, Swandby, Welling)

A. Rich reports that 4 WCF reps are: Peggy Hatch, Leland Rich, Mark Swandby, Beau Welling.

- B. Re-election of Anderson. The most significant action this year was the re-election of Anderson as the WCF Director of Finance. The Director of Finance is member of the Management Team.
- C. WCF Governance Change. Rich notes that the WCF is going through a governance change. In many ways it models the work of the USCA.
1. The change will be to a President and three VPs (one from each continent). There will not be a Director of Finance. There will no longer be a VP each for the U.S. and Canada – there will be one for North America.
 2. *Question:* When will the new WCF governance changes take effect? *Response:* The WCF is still working governance changes. A proposal was presented to the WCF reps in April 2-12. Anderson notes that the goal is to have the approval of the intention of the changes at the congress. He notes that one of the Executive Committee members will serve as Director of Finance.
- D. Events Leading to Worlds. The WCF is establishing control over all of the events leading to the World Championships. They currently run the Pacific event, and they will run the European Curling Championship. However, the WCF's involvement will be with regions, rather than countries.
- E. WCF Congress. The WCF is moving away from two meetings a year to one Congress a year. The first Congress will be in October in Scotland. The U.S. WCF representatives are working hard to get back to semi-annual meetings, since those are the only times our reps meet with other reps in the world.
- F. Freytag Award. Elmer Freytag is from the U.S. The WCF is changing the name of the Freytag award to the "Hall of Fame" award so that it is not associated with a specific nation.
- G. Mixed Doubles. The WCF is pushing Mixed Doubles as an Olympic event, and so is working to get more coverage. The WCF is trying to get more countries to hold Mixed Doubles events, and they are happy the U.S. has one. The goal is for Mixed Doubles to be an Olympic event by 2018, so its inclusion will be considered around 2014.
- H. Rules Changes. There will be no rules changes until after the Olympics. A survey has been sent to athletes and is posted on the WCF Website.
- I. New WCF Members. Anderson reports that Mongolia has been accepted as 47th member of WCF. There was also attempt to bring in Kosovo, which the Serbia rep spoke against. Action has been deferred until the next meeting. Kosovo isn't recognized by the United Nations, but the USOC has recognized Kosovo for the Paralympics.
1. *Question:* What are the criteria for becoming a member of the WCF? *Response:* To become a provisional member, a national governing body must be recognized by the Olympic committee in its own country as representing the sport in that country. To become a full member, a country must participate in the World Championships or the countries representative(s) must attend WCF meetings every other year.
- J. Voting Power. 92% of the world's curlers are in Canada. 96.8% of the world's curlers are in Canada, the U.S. and Scotland. Anderson notes there will be weighted votes, but that the WCF Governance Commission is struggling with how to weight them. Currently the U.S., Canada, Scotland, Switzerland have each have four reps with two votes each. Smaller countries are of sufficient number to override votes of those four.
- K. World Challenge and Curling in the Americas.

1. *Question:* What happened with the Brazilian Challenge in 2011-2012? *Response:* The team lost their coach, and dropped out. *Question:* Are we anticipating further challenges? *Response:* Yes.
 2. *Question:* Would the WCF take over the process if it happens next year? *Response:* Yes. Rich notes that one of the big disagreements within the WCF is related to the U.S. and Canada having one spot each – other countries have greater competitive challenges. Brazil's challenge of the U.S. helps temper this dissatisfaction.
 3. *Question:* Is there a way we can manage the mechanics of how the event is structured. *Response* by Anderson: Anderson notes that the Challenge has to be issued by a specific date. He asks: Should that date be moved up? The Challenge had to be played by January 31. The WCF can look into that schedule. Rich asks if it would it help if the date and place of the Challenge were determined now.
 4. Anderson notes that we should welcome additional countries into the Americas. Argentina and Peru have approached the WCF with expression of interest.
 5. Rich and DHP Derek Brown discuss the options for scheduling and planning a Challenge.
- L. Event Berths and Host Sites. Anderson notes that there was a strong push to go to a zonal structure – but the compromise was to give one more seat to the Asians and Europeans, boosting the field to 12 men's teams and 12 women's teams. That was half of the reason the events were split. Canada wanted to host one championship per year. Canada bought the rights to host one championship a year; that contract ends in 2014, and renewing will be reviewed.

XXIII. USWCA (Stannard)

- A. Stannard reports on the USCWA. The report of outgoing USWCA Liaison Janet Farr is posted on the Directors' Drop Box. *[see Appendix: USWCA Liaison Report]*
- B. The USWCA President is Bridget Matzke from Madison, Wis.
- C. USWCA-USCA liaison elected is Jennifer Stannard.
- D. Stannard notes that the USWCA will be using virtual meetings to facilitate action.
- E. The USWCA's strategic planning has not changed.
- F. The USWCA is financially healthy.
- G. Stannard reports that USCA President Sjue met with the USWCA.
- H. Stannard reviews the USWCA calendar.
- I. The USWCA will be working on junior coaching clinics at junior bonspiels, and will work with the USCA on this.
- J. Stannard adds that the USWCA Promotions will be funding their usual junior supplies programs this fall.
- K. The USWCA's 5-and-under open women's events continue to be well attended.
- L. The Women's Circuit completed its second year, and tripled its sponsorship.
- M. Stannard indicates that she has met with Nawyn about support for women curlers, junior curling and 5-and-under.
- N. Farr notes in her report that it has been a privilege to work with the USCA.

XXIV. Open board actions

- A. None

XXV. Unfinished business

- A. Sjue's Presidency comes to a close.
 1. Sjue recognizes and thanks Bob Pelletier for his nine years on Board and service as Secretary. Pelletier indicates that he's been proud to represent the GNCC.
 2. Sjue recognizes Lynita Delaney as a Wisconsin representative who has resigned.
 3. Sjue encourages everyone to send a note to retiring Vice President Jerome Larson, who has done a tremendous amount of work in the development of curling. Sjue dubs Larson the Johnny Appleseed of Curling, and notes that he has been a pillar in our organization.
 4. Sjue recognizes Janet Farr, who was unable to attend. She has served ably and represented the USWCA as its liaison to the USCA.
 5. Sjue notes that AAC has not yet held their election. He expresses appreciation for all for the AAC's work on behalf of the USCA, and reiterates that the AAC are also important members of their clubs.
 6. Sjue thanks everybody as his term ends. He is grateful for the privilege of passing the gavel to the new incoming president.
- B. Curling in New York. Gemmell reports on activity in the New York area. Currently there are eight sheets of ice for 30 million people. Gemmell notes that efforts are underway to get 12 sheets of curling ice with a few miles of Statue of Liberty. He indicates that the skating model won't work. The group is working on:
 1. Frozen water policy – if they learn of anybody freezing water, the group talks with them about why curling should be included.
 2. They have met with developers about including a curling facility in their projects.
 3. They encourage people who are trying to get a club built, encouraging them that if the club is in an area with a large population, it will do well.
 4. Gemmell reports on one project proposed for a facility that is 15 minutes from mid-town Manhattan.
 5. Gemmell is also pitching a curling project to a group of real estate developers as something unique and interesting, and that makes money.
 6. These curling projects may result in a club leasing a facility or a club owning a facility.
 7. Sjue notes that this is a classic example of athletes supporting our sport.
- C. Dues. The GNCC will be sending dues notices to arena clubs in about two weeks, and the USCA dues may be raised after they pay their dues. Sjue notes that the USCA may postpone a dues increase.
- D. Nutmeg's Dedicated Facility. Krailo reports that Nutmeg Curling Club has \$990,000 in the bank, and needs to raise another \$100,000. Krailo thanks those who have supported their efforts.

XXVI. New Business

- A. Sjue turns the gavel over to incoming President Pleasants. Pleasants thanks Sjue for his service.
- B. Pleasants relates the theme of his presidency: **United by our love of curling.** We sometimes forget that we're all here because we love the sport and that unites us. We have a task ahead of us with regard to governance. We agree on 20% Athlete participation. We agree that we need to operate by policy.

- C. Pleasants expressed his intent to develop a new Governance Task Force to address the governance issue as quickly as possible.
- D. Revenue Development. High performance. Member services. Pleasants notes that we have good people in place on the staff and VP sides. These are people have will and skills to do the work.
- E. Strategic Planning. Pleasants notes that it has been several years since the USCA reviewed its strategic plan; he indicates that we will be starting that process.
- F. The Joy of Curling. Pleasants' wish: I hope that we never forget the joy of curling. He notes that the Men's Scottish Tour was a great event for reminding him of the importance of that element of the sport.
- G. Pleasants recognizes Jeff Hannon as new GNCC Director and Lepping as Wisconsin-elected.
- H. Pleasants indicates that the Budget Meeting will be held in Bloomington, Minn., on .
- I. The next USCA Board of Directors meeting will be held in Bloomington, Minn., Sept. 21-23, 2012. *[Note: The meeting dates were later changed to September 14-16, 2012.]*

XXVII. Badgero moves/Krailo seconds adjournment of the Spring Board of Directors Meeting. Motion approved, 9:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Havercroft, USCA Secretary

JH:sr

APPENDIX

March 15, 2012

To: USCA Board of Directors

From: Nominating Committee

Mark Swandby (Chair), Bill Forsythe, Richard Maskel, Jon Mielke, Leland Rich

Subject: Slate of USCA Officers for Terms Beginning May 1, 2012

NOTE: This nomination slate is proposed under the current ("old") bylaws as it cannot not be assumed that the new proposed bylaws will be approved by the membership. If the bylaws are not changed, those elected will continue to serve under the current bylaws. If the bylaws are changed, those elected will serve during the transition to the new governance structure.

The following nomination slate will be presented for vote at the Spring 2012 USCA Board of Directors Meeting. Each of the nominees has indicated the willingness to serve if elected by the Board.

For one-year terms beginning May 1, 2012

President:	James Pleasants
Vice Presidents:	Kent Beadle David Carlson Gwen Krailo Sam Williams
Treasurer:	Sean Silver
Secretary:	Jonathan Havercroft
Board Elected Director:	Beau Welling Kent Beadle (if not re-elected Director from Minnesota) Rich Lepping (if not elected Director from Wisconsin)

For two-year term beginning May 1, 2012

Nominating Committee:	Bill Forsythe
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For three-year term beginning May 1, 2012:

World Curling Federation Representative:	Leland Rich Beau Welling
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VP Competitive Programs report: April 2012.

High Performance Update

Our High Performance program under the direction of Derek Brown has completed its initial season (with just the world Mixed Doubles competition left on the schedule). One highlight from this season's program was the bronze medal in Mixed Doubles for Korey Dropkin at the Youth Olympic Games. Korey was a part of the Stephen Dropkin junior team from Broomstones who was one of our Project 2018 teams. This rink won the US Junior Men's National Championship and had a strong showing at the World Junior Championships in March. Other project 2018 teams included Josh Bahr, Miranda Solem, and Rebecca Hamilton. Solem and Hamilton won silver and bronze medals respectively at the US Junior National Championships while the Gold was won by a non-program rink, Cory Christensen from Duluth. As often happens, the Christensen rink struggled in their first appearance at a world championship but they received great experience for their future competitions. This year's project 2018 teams received additional assistance from Project 2018 women's coach John Benton and Project 2018 Men's Coach Phill Drobnik.

Our men's and women's program teams had varying levels of success, with the Pete Fenson rink having the highest finish at the US National Championships, finishing runner-up to the Heath McCormick rink. Both McCormick and Fenson now qualify for the US Olympic Trials that will be held in Fargo, ND in November 2013, and the McCormick rink now joins our HP program. The Tyler George rink had an excellent World Curling Tour season, winning multiple events including an overseas cash-spiel in Hamburg. However, they struggled at the US Nationals finishing 6th. On the women's side, Erika Brown's rink reached the finals of a world class event at the Sun-Life Classic in Brantford, ON, while both Erika and Patti Lank won WCT events in the US as the new "Great Lakes" curling tour offered women's events at all Great Lakes cash spiels. Despite their early season successes, the US Nationals were a struggle for both rinks as Brown finished 5th and Lank finished 8th. If this tells us anything, it should give us an indication that the women's field is much more balanced (and deeper) than at any time in recent history. Winning the US Women's championship was the Alison Pottinger rink, with ¾ of the 2010 Olympic Team. Alison defeated 2006 Olympic skip Cassie Potter in the final. Both teams have now qualified for the 2013 Olympic Trials, and are now joining the HP program. After a slow start at the world championship, the Pottinger rink ran off a long string of wins to get themselves into a tie-breaker. Ultimately, they lost the tie-breaker and finished 5th. The 5th place finish puts us in a strong position qualify for the 2014 Olympics as the top 7 countries (not including Russia) in the 2012 and 2013 worlds get an automatic Olympic berth. Heath McCormick finished 8th at the world championship, at it will take a strong finish by next year's men's team to secure one of the seven automatic spots. Two additional spots to the Olympics will be awarded



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in a world tournament to be held in December 2013 with all countries not holding an automatic berth participating. The USCA is perusing locations that could host that Olympic Qualifying event.

Sport Education- The sport education initiative led by Scott Higgins published “The Five Elements of Curling Technique”. The book has been well received, selling out its first printing of 250 copies with 250 more printed. Over 400 copies of the book have now been sold and this is a good start to this new program. A second book titled “The Five Elements of Shot Making” is now in the works, once again in consultation with Rodger Schmidt who provided much of the expertise for the initial volume.

Coaching- Scott has formed a “working group” who are tasked with the following:

1. Develop a standardized model for training and certifying curling coaches at all levels, from youth to elite athletes.
2. Create and deliver a consumer awareness campaign to generate market demand for high quality coaching and sport education resources within the U.S. Curling community.
3. Develop methods to augment and improve coaching development on an ongoing, regular basis at the national, regional, and local level following initial certification.

The USCA is soliciting nominations for Coach of the Year and Development Coach of the Year. Those nominations will be evaluated this spring and a determination will be made this summer.

Adaptive/Wheelchair Curling- The US wheelchair curling team finished 5th in this year’s world championships, after a very strong start that saw them leading the pack for much of the week. A couple of late round robin losses and ultimately a loss in a tie-breaker game accounted for their 5th place finish. However, this was a very young and inexperienced team that has come a long way this season. The team is coached by Steve Brown with support from Rusty Schreiber and Marc DePerno, the USCA national wheelchair outreach and development program director.

High Performance Plan- The 2012-2013 High Performance Plan and Resource Request is due to the USOC on May 1st. An initial draft of the plan has been drawn up by Derek Brown and has been circulated to the High Performance Advisory Committee for review and feedback.

Sincerely,

Kent Beadle

TO: USCA Board of Directors

FROM: David Carlson

SUBJECT: Report 2011/2012 VP of Operations and Marketing

Athlete-Curler Recognition/Hall of Fame. The following recognitions were made: See report of Richard Maskel, Chair.

Human Resources. Kim Nawyn is the Growth and Development Manager. She started at the USCA office in Stevens Point in October, 2011. She relocated to Point from New York. She is curling at the Stevens Point Curling Club. See her report for further details about her responsibilities.

By-Laws. The proposed governance changes were adopted at the fall 2011 meeting of the Board of Directors by a 3/4ths in favor vote. Out reach by the Task Force Members to the States and Regions and clubs within the States and Regions have taken place over the 2011-12 curling season. Numerous conversations, e-mails and articles have addressed the concerns and objections of the Members. Two proposals have been made by way of amendments to the By-Laws as adopted by the Board of Directors at the fall 2011 meeting. One addresses the issue of Member initiated By-Law changes. The second addresses formalizing a Council of State and Regional Representatives with the Growth and Development Manager as Chair.

Revenue Development. The pin donation program was discontinued for the 2011/2012 year. In its place is an annual appeal program. Still falling short of 100% participation by the Directors of the USCA.

Planned Giving. Discussions have been had with Directors of the American Curling Foundation and Museum out of Chicago. Telephone conferences were also had with professional Planned Giving company in California, Crescendo and with a Planned Giving expert with the USOC, Jeff Mielke. The general consensus is that at this point in time any Planned Giving Program should focus upon testamentary bequests rather than any other form of Planned Giving.

Corporate Sponsorship/Large Donors. During the course of the 2011-12 year several contracts were negotiated with and entered into by the USCA with marketing companies. None of these required any fees to be paid up front by the USCA. Rather, all of them were on a commission basis. The marketing companies included Dan Myers as an independent contractor out of Berkeley, California, and RJM Licensing, Inc., Rob Mejia out of Mahwah, New Jersey. See COO's report for further details.

Director of Communications Report
Prepared by Terry L. Kolesar, Sept. 2011-April 2012 activities
& an overview of major projects (not all inclusive)

Publications & Designs

- **U.S. Curling News:** On the heels of a record-setting season for *Curling News* ad sales (\$12,636), we are on target to reach just under \$10,000 in ad revenue for the 2011-12 season, which equates to the second best season to date. The final print edition deadline is April 27. We will be producing a summer *Curling News* edition in digital format only. The deadline for the Summer edition is July 6. It will be emailed to the current e-mail database list on July 13 and posted online at www.curlingrocks.net.
- The **USA Curling website** is set for a re-design in the near future. If we sign the USOC digital media agreement we will be moving to their content management system and get a redesign. If we do not sign the agreement, our plan is to work with USA Curling sponsor AtomAmpd on a re-design similar to the design they used for the World Curling Federation's website (www.worldcurling.org). Either way, the current design will get a much-needed facelift in the next 12 months. The website currently is designed on two different content management systems. The front page, www.curlingrocks.net, was re-designed by marketing partner Mercury Communications in 2010 using Drupal. The three interior sections (www.usacurl.org/usacurl, www.usacurl.org/goodcurling and www.usacurl.org/curlingrocks) were re-designed in 2008 by USA Curling partner CurlingZone using Joomla. In essence, we have four websites – 1 being updated by me in Drupal and three being undated by me using Joomla, which is not at all ideal. It will be nice to have these combined into one efficient database using one content management system. Website maintenance and updating is one area where we continually need volunteer support. It is no secret that this is an area where we do not have a staff person who is savvy in website design, maintenance or general knowledge. We have learned on the fly and will do so again with a future re-design. This is an area where we are continually reliant on the expertise of IT sponsors, partners and volunteers who provide valuable time and support as I only have a basic working knowledge of the functionality of websites.
- I continue to distribute the e-newsletter, **Stone Soup**, to our e-mail fan base twice-monthly year-round. This is a great opportunity for including sponsor logos, contest links, and other timely information to a distribution list of now more than 11,000 recipients. The electronic newsletter became an important tool in spreading the word about our donation program campaign this winter as well as updates on many other exciting things going on within USA Curling. If you are currently not receiving the electronic newsletter, please let me know.
- A new media FTP server has been created with partner AtomAmpd as a more efficient tool for sharing photos and videos with members of the media. The server is now active and this summer I will begin adding files. This server also can be used by member clubs, staff as well as BOD members in need of photos and logos for club projects, newsletters, donation platforms, etc. Once it is fully functioning, I will share the info and guidelines for its use.

Media/Public Relations

- **Grants:** I was the recipient of two Media Assistance Program grants from the World Curling Federation this season to assist with my accommodations at the 2012 Youth Olympic Games in Austria as well as the 2012 World Men's Championship in Switzerland. This grant program was created last fall by the WCF. Without it, I would not have been able to travel to the YOG to work with Team USA. Receiving it a second time was a bonus that I do not anticipate in the future although member nations can earn it twice per season. I don't want to rely or come to expect it each season but plan to continue to apply for assistance to offset my travel budget, in particular for 2014 for the test events in Sochi.
- **Sochi 2014:** I continue to work on my Sochi 2014 communication plan and media strategy for working with Team USA and promoting the sport of curling through the media. I will be attending the **Olympic Public Relations Association's** two-day workshop once again this fall in Colorado Springs to network with fellow NGB press officers and stay on top of Sochi planning and other media-related topics for sports writers.
- **USA Curling Media & PR Committee action:** This committee will look for candidates for the Bruce Bennett Media Award presented by USA Curling. To date, this award has been handed out six times to eight media recipients in total since 2000.
- **49ers Winterfest:** For the second time, 2010 Olympians Tracy Sachtjen and John Benton were invited to lead the curling demonstration at the San Francisco 49ers charity event held annually in Lake Tahoe. This continues to be a great opportunity for curling to partner with the NFL on special projects that hopefully will eventually lead to future sponsorships for USA Curling. Jerome Larson and the Wine Country Curling Club provided the rocks and brooms once again.
- **Super Bowl:** To say our sport was popular during the 10-day curling demo in the Super Bowl Village would be an understatement. We estimate that we gave approximately 10,000 fans an opportunity to throw rocks in Indianapolis between Jan. 27 and Super Bowl Sunday on Feb. 5. Volunteer help was provided by the Circle City Curling Club, USA Curling members as well as staff. Equipment was provided by [Chad McMullen \(Rock Solid Productions\)](#). (Photos from the event are posted in our photo galleries at www.curlingrocks.net).
- Since Jan. 1, I have spent 52 days on the road spreading the curling gospel from the Continental Cup to the Youth Olympic Games in Innsbruck to the Men's World Championship in Basel and many stops in between.

Social media

The USA Curling social media pages continue to be popular outlets for sharing information, especially during championship events (as I discovered this season with the unexpected outpouring of positive comments on the Twitter feed during world championship and national events). The USA Curling YouTube page is the one I need to put some more time and effort into this summer, especially in preparation for the 2014 Olympic Winter Games.

If you haven't checked them out, here are USA Curling's social media links:

- [Facebook](#) (more than 19,000 fans)
- [Twitter](#) (904 followers)
- [YouTube](#)

- [Foursquare](#)
- [Google+](#) (USA Curling's newest social media tool. Page still being built)

Championships:

- **Webstreaming:** We had great success this season at the National Championships with our webstream coverage of every draw of the championships. Total viewership was just under 200,000 viewers for the eight days of coverage. USA Curling hired and collaborated with Joe Calabrese and Brian Anderson (Rochester, N.Y., curlers/playdown athletes and proprietors of the 12th End Sports Network) for coverage of every draw of the round robin plus playoffs. We rotated a core group of on-air "talent," which was volunteer driven (driven/flown from as far away as MN and ND). The webstream is just one of the many reasons why the 2012 Nationals in Philly were successful (propelled by a dynamic host committee!). We will continue to look for ways to improve upon the huge leap forward USA Curling took in terms of webstreaming for future events.
- **Young journalists program:** One goal of mine is to continue to build upon the Young Journalists Program I started in 2011 at the Nationals in Fargo. My goal is two-fold – to provide high school and college students with real-life journalism experience at a national caliber event while enhancing USA Curling's coverage of these events. So far it has been a win-win situation, and this year's program could not have worked out any better. I sent out e-mails to local high schools and college in the Aston, PA, area (site of the 2012 National Championships) about the media volunteer opportunities and was provided with two very talented and energetic high school students to work with. They worked hard for seven days after school and enjoyed it so much that they are trying to find a way to be in Green Bay next year for the 2013 Nationals. Having Jeff and Heather added to the media team helped with a variety of projects from post-game video interviews with athletes, to photography for the USA Curling website as well as the daily newspaper produced by USA Curling during the Nationals (the Daily Pebble) to general assistance when media members came to cover the event at IceWorks. Media coverage at this event in a non-Olympic Trials year was outstanding. A PDF of a majority of the articles produced during the 2012 Nationals can be found in the BOD Drop Box. Check out a few of the pieces the students created (hyperlinked below):
 - [Jeff Albertini's final documentary](#)
 - [YouTube Channel created during the event](#)
- For the championships as a whole, I continue to write press releases to promote all playdown events and who is competing, reach out to hometown newspapers, and cover the event with a minimum of one press release per day throughout the event. In addition to the press releases, I coordinate photo galleries and social media throughout all the national and world championships.

Other significant ongoing projects (not all inclusive):

- 2013 Nationals and 2014 Olympic Trials planning
- "Dream Big: 2014 Olympic Hopefuls" video
- 2013-14 Webstreaming plans
- Website redesign plans/site map
- Contest promotions
- Team Fan Shop promotions
- Championship event planning & marketing

- *Curling News* organizing, planning, writing, layout
- Daily communication outreach with the USA Curling community
- Daily website maintenance
- Athlete biography updates
- Other assignments from Rick
- Sponsor/partner promotions and contract fulfillments

	2012-13			2011-12			2010-11			2009-10	
	Nov. 15-18	Approved		No event	Approved		Nov. 18-21	Approved	No event	Approved	No event
WUG World							27 Jan - 6 Feb	Turkey			
Youth Olympics World				Nov 18-20-ish Jan 13 - 22	Grafton Innsbruck, AUS		no event	no event			
Mixed Doubles World	Dec. 6-9			Dec. 8-11	Broomstones?		Dec. 9-12 16-23 April	Duluth StPaul		Dec. 3-6	Seattle
Wheelchair Trials World	Dec. 6-9			Oct. 20-23 Feb 18 - 25	Madison Chuncheon City, South Korea		Dec. 9-12 TBA	Green Bay? Prague, CZE		No event	No event
Qualifier - Men East Midwest - N Midwest - S West	Jan. 2-6	The C Club		Jan. 4-8			Jan. 5-9	Rochester Bismarck		Jan. 6-10	Potomac Fargo-Moorhead Mankato Fairbanks
Qualifier - Women East Midwest West	Jan. 3-6	Rochester					Jan. 6-9	Seattle removed BOD April 2010 Nutmeg Seattle		Jan. 7-10	Nashua Green Bay Fairbanks
Continental Cup							Jan12-16	St. Albert, AB			
Challenge - Men Challenge-Women	Jan 17-20 "			Jan. 19-22 "	Appleton?		Jan. 19-23 "			Feb. 4-7 "	Grafton Janesville
M/W Junior Nats. World	Jan 26-Feb 2 Feb 28-Mar 10	Broomstone Russia	???	28 Jan - 5 Feb Mar 3 - 11	Madison Ostersund, Sweden		Jan 29-Feb 5 TBA	Fairbanks Perth, SCO		Jan.23-30	Bemidji
Seniors - Men Seniors - Women World	Jan 26 -30 Jan 26 -30 April 13-20	Fairbanks, AK Fairbanks, AK TBD	Need Bid	Nov. 30 - Dec. Dec. 2-4	Bismarck Grafton		16-23 April	Broomstone Pardeeville StPaul		Jan. 27-31 Jan. 27-31	Portage Cape Cod
M/W Nats/Trials World Men World Women				Feb 11-18 31 M - 8 April	Philadelphia Basel, Switzerland		Feb. 12-19 2-10 April 19-27 March	Fargo Regina, CA Esbjerg, DK		Mar. 6-13	Kalamazoo
M/W Club Champ.	Mar. 2-9	Exmoor	Lake Region (Jan Legacie); Grafton (Susan Tharalson)	Mar. 3-10			Mar. 5-12	Midland?Chicago?		Feb. 20-27	Madison
Mixed Natl.Champ.	Mar. 16-23			Mar. 17-24			Mar 19-26	Midland?Bismarck		Mar. 20-27	Chicago
Red - Clubs that have asked/or have been asked to host an event but bid has not been received					Pink - bid received, needs to be approved						
USWCA BSPL USWCA Sr. BSPL Men's Sr. Bspl April 15, 2009		Wis. Central			West East Milw. Area		Central 11-15 Fe Wis 1-5 Dec	Cleveland Blackhawk Chicago Area		East 2/10-14 West 12/2-6	Schenectady Grand Forks Columbia County

A photograph of four women in teal jackets holding a large wooden trophy. They are standing in front of a wall with a sign that reads "MANKATO CURLING CLUB" and "MANKATO MN". There are also flags of Canada and the United States visible in the background. The text "Hosting USCA Events at your Club" is overlaid on the image in a large, bold, black font.

Hosting USCA Events at your Club

You've got questions. We've got answers.

Every year, the United States Curling Association crowns national champions in a number of different events. These events reflect the diversity of our membership, as we award titles in Men's, Women's, Mixed, Mixed Doubles, Junior Men's, Junior Women's, Senior Women's, Senior Men's, Men's Club Nationals and Women's Club Nationals.

Running national championships is an essential part of the mandate of the USCA. Not only do these events stoke the competitive metabolism of our membership but they provide opportunities to play against and enjoy the company of curlers from around the nation.

All of these events, however, need clubs that are willing to host them. Without question, serving as a host site demands much of each club and its membership. There is usually league play that must be sacrificed, organizational demands that must be met and additional ice making duties that must be handled.

But, just as there is sacrifice for host clubs, there are also considerable rewards that we hope you'll consider.

HERE'S WHY HOSTING AN EVENT IS GOOD FOR YOUR CLUB.

These events, including the qualifying events that teams competing for national championships play, feature accomplished curlers and produce exciting viewing for spectators. Throughout most competitions, your membership will be able to see terrific curling.

But watching good curling is only the start of it. Consider these benefits:

- **If it's a qualifying event, the members of your own club will enjoy the convenience of competing at home.** For some curlers, this is a perfect opportunity to see how they fare in a qualifying event or a national championship like Mixed Doubles or Seniors. Not only will your own club members enjoy the benefits of competing on their home ice, they'll save considerable money on travel and lodging costs.



- **Ice expertise.** At some qualifying events, the USCA will provide a top ice technician to help prepare and maintain the surface for play. Ice crews at host clubs have welcomed the opportunity to gain valuable knowledge and insight into their equipment and their current practices. As a result, clubs that host events usually see their ice improve after the event is over, so the membership enjoys better conditions during club play.

- **Insight into draws and organization.** Some of our events are more complicated to run than others but all of them will provide your membership with ideas that can help improve the way your club leagues and bonspiels are conducted.
- **An opportunity for your club members to progress as certified officials.** Our events require officials to monitor play and render judgements when necessary. For many, becoming a certified official can be a great way to attend championship events. Some of our officials will even serve in the Olympics. With an event at your club, members who might want to experience officiating have an opportunity to try it.
- **Promotion of your club to the curling community.** When curlers travel to your club and you run a successful event, the news travels back with them. That can make people from other clubs more likely to enter your bonspiels or simply tell others — including non-curling friends they may know in your area — about your club.
- **A chance to profit.** If you market the event well and attract spectators — both club members and outsiders — your efforts will be rewarded with increased revenue. Bar receipts are one opportunity and many clubs use the event to sell food to competitors and spectators.
- **A way to make your club feel connected to the curling community.** When club members actively participate in the event and get an opportunity to mingle with competitors from other clubs, everyone wins. Your members make new connections that they might wind up competing with at an event in the future. What's more the effort that goes into the effort, while considerable, also serves to remind your membership that curling is a truly remarkable sport that is rich in cooperation and good sportsmanship.

It's not a simple decision for a club to agree to host a USCA event. But when clubs are willing to support events, it makes our national curling community stronger. Once you agree to serve as a host, we will do everything possible to help you make it successful.

We appreciate any consideration your club gives to hosting a USCA event. If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Event Services Manager Report

By: Dawn Leurquin

Spring Board Meeting 2012 (4-19-12)

Online Registration System: The Sports Signup online registration system worked very well last season. Better processing results were achieved than during previous years we used registration software. Over the summer, some small changes will be implemented to more effectively use the systems features. This mainly involves creating reports that will be more specifically tailored to particular requirements. Revising the method of taking post-deadline coach and fifth player applications will also be involved. Each registration site will be reopened after a deadline passes, so that coaches and fifth players (only) can enter the specific event and/or region they wish to become associated with. This will allow administrators to continue to roster coaches and fifth players to their respective teams. That, in turn, allows the team members to all know that the entry has been reviewed and they're set to compete.

Part of the difficulty in managing registrations is the last minute rush that occurs just before a deadline. Almost always, shortly after a late entry is submitted, an email is sent or a call comes in to see if it was received and if everything looks okay. It is difficult to answer many calls and emails while simultaneously trying to check entries in a systematic way, with a deadline is looming ahead. When regional events are involved, the various calls and emails waste time by shifting inspecting eyes from region to region and team to team. Add the other events that registrations are also open for registrations and it gets very confusing. Reinstating a late fee or offering an early registration discount will help alleviate the onslaught of last minute entries.

Background Checks: As soon as possible, the NCSI (National Center for Safety Initiatives) background screening information and the self-pay code will be put up on the USCA Web site. This will replace the task of having to email the information to individuals that need to have background screens done, such as Junior Nationals coaches and chaperones.

In an effort to possibly create another member benefit, I approached NCSI to check on the possibility of offering our member clubs the same benefits that the USCA receives, using their services. Initially, they said it would be a little more expensive for the clubs, but after requesting that member clubs be allowed the same discounted cost the USCA gets, NCSI arranged it accordingly. Soon NCSI background screening information will be shared with our member clubs through Growth and Development (if it hasn't already been done).

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions): Many support request emails received during the registration season involve repetitive questions. Creating a "frequently asked questions" document for posting on the USA Curling Web site was suggested. This list, once created, should help reduce the number of inquiries that are received. Utilizing the same Sports Signup software system next season will help with this as well, because people who registered the previous season will be familiar with its use and the

process. Those with a Sports Signup account will only need to login and complete their event application(s).

Rules Book: A personal goal that work has already begun on is separating the Rules Book and the event information within it that changes seasonally, into two separate documents. Changing event information is what typically causes the Rules Book to be held back from publication. Usually it is only one or two events that we're still trying to find host sites for while other events have already been opened for registrations. Because a current Rules Book isn't available, the previous season's Rules Book must be referred to if there are questions. But outdated information is listed there. Separating the two documents should allow for earlier posting of the Rules Book. The Event Schedule and Related Information document can be posted and updated as seasonal information is finalized. This should inform people quickly about which events we still are looking for a site for, among other things. I'm hoping to create a more user-friendly index within the Rules Book that has corresponding page numbers and additional listings so that the answers to other frequently received support questions can be found much easier than in the past.

Championships Procedure Manual: The Championships Procedure Manual is also in need of an update. This guide is provided to sites that agree to host a USCA Championship and provides hosting procedures and other information, categorized by events.

Budget: Budget-wise, the USCA could use some simple laptops and monitors to send to the host site clubs to be used for timing. The clubs have been gradually (and voluntarily) switching over from using the older Daktronics time clocks to using laptop timing (aka computerized). Clubs must ask their members to loan computers and flat screen monitors or TVs, for use at Championships. To prevent hosting an event from becoming a burden, we should look into getting this equipment.

We still use Daktronics clocks for the Nationals so that they can be viewed easier from a distance, which is important since this venue is typically in an arena setting. But it isn't ideal to send them out on the championships road with the other officiating equipment, going from site to site over the season as there is much bumping and bouncing and the plastic housings have become brittle over time. The computers can be basic models and at as little cost as is possible. Perhaps they could even be donated by our members?

It would be nice to begin to contemplate the purchase of a custom designed software package for the online registration system that could also integrate the membership database. There are businesses out there that specialize in this but they come with a significant price tag. With all of the tasks that need to be completed during the curling season (and otherwise) this would be a worthwhile investment if it can streamline the registration process, and free up eyes and hands that can be better utilized for more important tasks that need to be accomplished.

Equipment Maintenance: The officiating equipment that returned after being out on the road seems to mostly be okay. There are a few magnetic strips that will need to be replaced. There are two radio bases that don't seem to work like they should and it was reported that one radio will send but not receive, so these items need to be sent in for repairs. Some of the new officiating jackets need to be cleaned. The

older jackets have been bagged and boxed up as there is only one open closet in the office for officiating jacket use and the newer jackets are hung there during the “off” season. The sensor handles will be checked when our volunteer returns from the Senior Men’s World event.

Donations: It is wonderful to be able to report that athlete donations were up significantly from the previous season when they totaled almost \$150. The 2011-2012 season athletes generously donated over a thousand dollars all together. The amounts ranged from the lowest being \$5 and the highest at \$50. Talk about team work! With the USOC doubling the donation dollars, their donation efforts became even more significant. That rocks!

Odds and Ends: The 2-Year and 10-Year AAC lists will be updated ASAP upon our return from the board meeting. The Nike returns are being readied for return and we’re waiting for our Nike reps to tell us what goes where. Once we know that, we can finish sorting and get them shipped back to Nike and the Nike budget numbers can be recalculated.

Host site clubs were provided with an event banner rather than a host site plaque last season. There could be some discussion about this in the Championships meeting. Hopefully the banners were well liked by the clubs. The banners were a little more modern than the plaques were, more noticeable, and less expensive. They’re also quicker and less expensive to acquire since they’re created right next door to the home office – they also embroider our uniforms. They became our neighbors over the previous summer.

Event Statistics: The event statistics have been updated and reflect the activity of the past five seasons since we’ve implemented online registration. This information tabulation had to be completed rather quickly with the board meeting approaching so quickly, but it should mostly be in order.

A separate worksheet within the spreadsheets is used to track trends in registrations. Over the past season, the Men’s, Women’s, Paralympics, Junior Men’s and Mixed Doubles registration numbers didn’t change much. Senior Women’s and Junior Women’s team entries were the same. The Senior Men’s entries were down by nine teams, the Mixed Nationals entries overall, were down by 11 teams. The Men’s Club Nationals entries were up by 24 teams. A ten team increase was seen in the Men’s Club Nationals Mountain Pacific (MoPac) Region alone, since the region opened registrations up to any teams that wished to participate. The registration history information has been posted for the Directors, if interested, on the Dropbox Web site for the USCA board meeting. It is within the Championships folder there.

SafeSport: A very important thing on the Event Services Manager’s summer “to-do” list is working on the USCA’s SafeSport Handbook project. The SafeSport Handbook is a project that USOC already has well in progress. The USOC is currently constructing a Web site intended to be a centralized safe sport resource for the NGB community – including coaches, volunteers, parents and athletes. The USOC’s SafeSport Web site will offer online training and certification, as well as a SafeSport Toolkit that will include policies and procedures, reporting procedures, case studies, trends, tips from the field and audit practices. The USOC’s toolkit will include a link to their SafeSport Handbook. Some staff members have already had the opportunity to test the SafeSport Web site training module that is soon to be launched.

It is a very informative, well-needed program. NGBs can choose to adopt all or portions of the SafeSport Handbook. The USOC is allowing NGBs to use their example as a model for our own manual. This work will be completed in conjunction with others within the USCA and the USOC.

Users will receive a certification upon successful testing. The user fee is \$10 but package pricing may be available as well. There are about 20 different segments to the training. The training takes approximately 90 minutes and includes definitions and signs of maltreatment, risk factors, screening and background checking, travel, and reporting. The USOC's SafeSport program will draft template emails that we can use to inform our regions and clubs about the SS initiative.

It's very hard for a child to speak out when someone abusing them. It isn't the USCA that needs protection; it's the young athletes that curl! Please do what you can to help make this program a success. Willfully tolerating negative behavior supports it when we should be stopping it. Let's do everything we can to protect curling kids while making the USCA stronger and safer.

I hope you have a great summer.

April, 2012 Report to the United States Curling Association Board of Directors

Intercollegiate Club Curling

This year of college curling started off with the revelation that Rich Larko and the Illinois Curling Foundation (ICF) was changing the format of the existing College National's into a Regional format. I never intended to get into putting on a national event, but the vacuum needed to be filled.

There was not enough time to set one up for 2012, but I have reserved ice time March 8-10, 2013 at the Duluth Curling Club, with a field of 16 set. The entrants will be seeded into 4 groups of 4, will play a round robin within that group. The 4 winners will go to the medal round.

In contrast to the ICF's "open" format with divisions set up based on experience level, I intend for this event to be a merit based invitational format. In brief, there will be three ways to earn a berth into the National's: 1) The winning school of the most experienced division of any ICF sponsored Regional, 2) The winning school of any college only bonspiel consisting of 16 or more teams will receive an automatic berth, 3) The remaining schools of the ICF regional, or any other college only bonspiel, and all schools of any smaller college only event, even two team head to head events, will receive points based on how well they placed and how big the event was. Schools hosting events of 4 schools or more will also receive points in addition to those based on how well they finished.

Details on this will be in the next Curling News, and on our website and Facebook page.

There was initial concern from the Univ of Tennessee and Univ of Nebraska-Omaha that they would be shut out of the Nationals because there was no local competition for them. Their concern seems to be centered around the assumption that the ICF events would go away. I pointed out to them that as far as I knew, the ICF events would not go away, so automatic berths are available, and that if they worked at getting more local schools involved or hosted events to bring in outside schools, they would have a good chance at a spot.

In response, the Univ of Tennessee is hosting the first ever Southern College Curling Bonspiel this August. They are hoping for 16 teams, and I have told them that if they do, the winning school will receive an automatic berth to the Nationals.

Please note that I have deliberately used the term "school" in describing the entrants to the Nationals. I want the players to not think of the 4 people on the ice, but the school curling club as the unit. Getting them to think of "beating school A" rather than "beating Team Smith" will encourage more rivalry and jumpstart the process of playing other schools on a regular basis.

Right now our biggest concern is financial. I am committed to cover the ice time, if needed. Since this is an invitational, I would like to raise enough money to provide, at least, transportation subsidies and have no entry fees.

Comments and suggestions are welcome.

Gordon Maclean- Director College Curling



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**USCA Growth and Development Report
Spring Board of Directors Meeting
April 20-22, 2012**

Growth and Development Manager is a new position at USA Curling focused on administering current programs for member clubs while proactively working to grow the sport and expand educational and developmental programs. As a plan for Growth and Development was not in place when I assumed the position, I have developed a two-stage proposal to lay the foundation for progress. The first step includes improving existing programs and preparing for the influx of interest we expect following the 2014 Olympic games. Proposed emphasis is on the following goals: improving certification and educational programs, creating useful resources for emerging clubs, and developing a guide for recruiting and retaining curlers.

The second stage focuses on developing a plan for the next 5-10 years. Drawing upon my work at USA Curling, conversations with curlers from around the country, exploratory research, enrollment in certification courses, volunteering for events, input from colleagues, and experience as a curler, I developed a lengthy survey that was distributed to club presidents in March. The survey is posted in the Growth & Development folder on Dropbox. In addition to gaining a better understanding of current club programs, the survey is designed to enhance organizational knowledge of club needs and programming preferences. Approximately forty clubs have responded to date, and additional clubs have contacted me regarding their plans to complete the survey during board meetings in late April or early May. Results will be analyzed over the summer months and resulting report distributed to clubs at the beginning of the 2012-2013 season. Through collaboration with a Growth & Development Advisory Board, which has yet to be established, I plan to use the surveys as a basis for decision-making regarding future plans for establishing educational and developmental programs. The Growth & Development Advisory Board will also help spearhead the development of a realistic, proactive approach to increasing the number of curlers in the United States.

The following summary touches upon some of the main areas on which I have focused during the past six months, including further discussion of each of the proposed first-stage goals. Topics should not be seen as completely inclusive. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have questions on topic areas that have not been included.

Emerging Clubs

The Growth and Development Manager is the main contact at USA Curling for individuals and organizations looking to bring curling to their local areas. Prior to my joining the organization, a packet entitled "How to Start a Curling Club" was developed. This packet has traditionally been mailed to anyone who inquires about club development. While it contains helpful information, the scope of the material can be overwhelming. Over the past six months, I've been experimenting with a more proactive approach to such inquiries. This includes providing each applicant with practical, action-oriented



MEMBER: UNITED STATES OLYMPIC COMMITTEE ■ WORLD CURLING FEDERATION



information that s/he can begin to address immediately. I also work to connect representatives of emerging clubs with people in the curling community who have experience and expertise in relevant areas. Such networking helps emerging clubs gain valuable insight while becoming entrenched in the established curling community.

Through these efforts, the need for a practical, focused, step-by-step guide for emerging clubs became evident. The guide, which could include information on first steps, how to structure an organization, how to acquire equipment, how to negotiate with the arena, how to structure an open house, etc., could also include actual examples of by-laws and contracts used by existing clubs. In addition to the development of such a guide, I will propose the establishment of a mentoring program to the Arena Curling Committee. Since it is not practical for the Growth & Development Manager to work closely with all emerging clubs that contact USA Curling, identifying people who are willing to mentor motivated groups will help us lay the foundation to better capitalize on the grass-roots development efforts following the 2014 Olympics.

Arena Curling

During the past six months, a number of arena curlers have contacted me with questions on various topics, including effective recruitment and retention practices. As relatively little has been written about arena curling, I conducted some exploratory research on recruitment and retention. With responses from approximately forty members of arena curling clubs, I was able to identify some basic themes. These include the importance of ongoing, coordinated marketing efforts; the benefit of offering adequate training opportunities for new curlers; the advantages of creating a sense of community within the club; and the need to develop a solid working relationship with the host arena. The resulting report, entitled "Recruiting and Retaining Arena Curlers (February 2012)," was distributed to all presidents of arena curling clubs. A copy of the report is posted in the Growth & Development folder on Dropbox.

Based on a proposal from the Arena Curling Committee, I also distributed a survey to all arena club presidents to gauge interest in a USCA Arena Curling Championship. The results of this survey and a summary can be found in the following files posted to Dropbox: "USCA Arena Curling Championship Questionnaire Summary (04-17-12)" and "USCA Arena Curling Championship Questionnaire Results (04-17-12)."

Guide for Recruiting and Retaining Curlers

The need for more information on effective recruiting and retention practices, as discussed above, is not limited to arena clubs. While some dedicated clubs have strong recruiting and retention programs, many have the potential to benefit from information on effective practices. In fact, several responses to the Growth & Development survey noted that "effective recruiting practices" was the club's top priority. One respondent wrote, "We just need guidance. So many of our club members have been around so long, new curlers were never an issue before. Now, with the Olympic coverage, we are getting a lot more adults interested who have never been on the ice before." I will discuss my proposed goal of providing practical recruiting and retention information to clubs with the Member Services Committee. I believe that results from the Growth and Development survey will help the organization identify some effective practices in this area. Providing clubs with this type of resource prior to the 2014 Olympics may help them more effectively capitalize on the anticipated influx of interest in the sport on the local level.

Training and Instruction

Ice Technicians: Since September 2011, three opportunities for ice technician training have been sponsored by the USCA, including:

- Arena Curling Icemaker Course on September 9-11, 2011, in Woodbury, Minnesota: **12 attendees**

The Arena Curling Icemaker Course, taught by Kevin Madsen and Dave Staveteig, was offered prior to my joining the organization. Since it was the first time the USCA offered the course, I designed a survey to evaluate strengths and weaknesses. Overall, respondents found the information useful, understandable, and valuable to their work as arena ice technicians. The major criticism was the amount of focus on ideal ice conditions. Future attendees will likely respond well to more targeted focus on the type of conditions that they typically face when preparing ice for league play. Documents containing results and summary of this research are posted in the Growth & Development folder on Dropbox; see "Arena Curling Icemaker Course Questionnaire Results (11-15-11)" and "Arena Curling Icemaker Course Questionnaire Summary (11-15-11)." I have been in touch with Kevin Madsen about scheduling an Arena Curling Icemaker course for the 2012-2013 season.

- USCA Level I Ice Technician Certification Course on December 3-4, 2011, in Duluth, Minnesota: **22 attendees**

During the summer of 2011, Rick Patzke made an agreement with Mark Shurek, Certified Level IV CCA Ice Technician, to teach the CCA Ice Technician Certification courses to members of the USCA. In preparation for the first course in December, I wrote a contract for the course conductors, sent out advertisements, monitored the registration process, fielded questions from participants, and located alternative accommodations for participants when the host hotel sold out. I also worked very closely with Jerri Mead, an immigration attorney in Indiana, to prepare the proper documentation for Mark Shurek and Greg Ewasko (co-instructors) to cross the border.

One of the advertised benefits of this course was attendees would receive certifications in both the United States and Canada. In fact, 8 of the 10 participants who answered an online survey following the class responded affirmatively to the following survey question, "Did the fact that the certification from this course will be recognized as equivalent to Level 1 Canadian Curling Association (CCA) Ice Technician standards influence your decision to enroll?" Unfortunately, there was some miscommunication between Mr. Shurek and the CCA in this regard. While Canadian Curling Association has graciously agreed to honor Mr. Shurek's commitment to award CCA Certifications for attendees of this course, we may not be able to offer CCA certifications as a part of these courses in the future. As there are currently clubs on the East Coast, West Coast, and in the Midwest interested in offering this course in the beginning of the 2012-2013 season, decisions need to be made about whether to continue offering this program or develop a curriculum specific to USA Curling.

- Ice Making Seminar on March 30-31, 2012, in Anchorage, Alaska: **12 attendees**

This ice making seminar was taught by Dave Staveteig in Anchorage, Alaska. As the ice makers in Alaska were interested in addressing specific issues they were encountering, Dave ran a hands-

on course using the WCF Curling Ice Explained manual. Attendees were not certified as Level I Ice Technicians, as the course was outside of the CCA curriculum.

Instructors: Since the beginning of October, the USCA has offered six Level I Instructor courses, with a total of eighty-nine students, and two Level II Instructor courses, with a total of seventeen in attendance. Approximately sixty people have earned the Level I certification and eight earned the Level II certification during this time period. As the established procedure for tracking and processing certification courses is administratively time consuming, I have taken the initial steps to begin streamlining the process. This includes emailing course completion acknowledgements to attendees rather than mailing a letter. I have also experimented with sending email reminders, updated correspondence to include specific details regarding certification requirements, and created a standardized flyer which is distributed to the host and area clubs.

In the weeks following the 2012 USCA Spring Annual Meeting, Sandra McMakin, chair of the Instruction and Training Committee, and I will put together a work group to evaluate the current content of the Instructor program. As trained instructors play an important role in introducing new curlers to the sport, we are preparing to update the Instructor curriculum if needed and create a professional quality presentation that can be used in courses throughout the country prior to the 2014 Olympics.

Officiating: Five Level I Officiating Courses and four Level II Courses were offered since October of this year. Prior to my joining the organization, Christy Herring contacted the organizers of regional and national events to determine their needs for officiating training courses. As a number of these sites were either unsure or slow to respond, I also contacted each site for which there was any question. A total of forty-nine students completed Level I courses and thirty-two completed Level II. Since October, forty Officiating certifications have been awarded.

Similar to the Instructor Courses, I instituted the use of a standardized flyer to advertise USCA Officiating Courses. I also updated all correspondence to participants in these classes and emailed class attendance acknowledgements and certification instructions to participants in lieu of mailing a letter. In preparation for the championship season, I received numerous requests for lists of local officials from event organizers. While this should be a simple request to fulfill, the spreadsheet that the current USCA Certification Database produces contains only a list of names, level of certification, and addresses of officials. It does not supply email addresses, phone numbers, or any information regarding whether the official is currently active. To provide clubs with relevant contact information, I often resorted to searching the Membership Database and paper files. As remedying this situation requires additional research on databases, I am postponing discussion of practical ways to improve the Officiating certification system with the Championship Committee until I have a chance to gather more information on possible approaches.

Coaching: Since the coaching certification program is currently under review, no training courses were offered this season. However, I contributed to the coaching work group run by Scott Higgins, the Director of Sport Education.

Youth Curling

Dawn Leurquin, Rick Patzke, and I worked with the National Center for Safety Initiatives (NCSI) to offer the background check program USA Curling currently uses for junior playdowns and camps to all clubs at the organization's reduced rate. In addition to making this program available to the GNCC for their annual meeting in April, information about this opportunity will be provided to all clubs prior to the 2012-2013 season. (Flyers are posted to Dropbox.) Clubs will be encouraged to conduct background checks on all adults working with youth curlers. Dawn Leurquin, Scott Higgins, and I will also be considering possible ways to apply the new United States Olympic Committee Safe Sport initiative to

curling. The program, which is aimed at improving the safety of youth athletes, will be more fully released by the USOC later this month.

Dave Jensen and I teamed up on the application process for the 2012 U-18 Optimist International competition held in Toronto. We had a total of 9 applications for six slots, 3 from women's teams and 6 from men's teams. Two of the men's teams were chosen by committee; the third team was chosen through a playdown in the GNCC. Out of a field of 12 international teams, the women's teams placed as follows: Wisconsin #4, Pennsylvania, #8, and Michigan #10. The results for the men's teams include: Minnesota #7, Washington #10, and Pennsylvania #11. I'm also working with Dave on administrative issues in preparation for junior summer camps.

Club Liability Insurance Program

Management of the Club Liability Insurance Program was transferred from Event Services to Growth & Development for the 2011-2012 season. As the GNCC uses their own program, all clubs outside of the GNCC were contacted regarding the USCA Liability Insurance Program, which includes General Liability and Medical Accident coverage. Forty-three clubs, with a total of 4,195 curlers, opted to participate in this program. After receiving the completed application and payment, clubs were sent a copy of the Certificate of Insurance. Although two clubs that participated in the program from last year did not return, five additional clubs opted in (Missoula, Orange County, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Wine Country, and Oklahoma).

Based on my interactions with clubs while administering this program, it appears that a number of clubs have questions about Director and Officer insurance and other coverage programs. While I was able to refer them to Steve Gutro, our insurance broker, it is evident that clubs are looking for more information. I have broached the subject of writing an article for the Curling News next season about insurance coverage with Steve Gutro.

WCF Stone Purchase Program

USA Curling received 28 sets of stones through the World Curling Federation Stone Purchase Program in order to meet the anticipated need following the 2010 Olympics. We currently have four sets of Ailsa Craig Common Green stones and two sets of Welsh Blue Trefor stones available. All clubs are up-to-date on stone payments.

Since October 2011, the Poynette Curling Club entered into a contract and took possession of two sets of stones. Two of the seven sets previously under contract with the Hollywood Curling Club were transferred to Orange County Curling Club, who assumed the remaining payments for the stones. While writing the contracts for these transactions, I noticed a significant weakness in contract language. After addressing the issue, a revised contract was used in the above transactions. In addition, a number of emerging and established clubs have expressed interest in the WCF stone program over the past several months. While several clubs remain undecided about their prospective stone purchase, some are in the process of purchasing stones from other sources. Feedback suggests that their decision to purchase other stones was based primarily on cost.

Video Production

A six minute video entitled "Dare to Curl" was introduced to the public on YouTube this fall, with the prospect of a full-length version to be released during the 2011-2012 season. However, as a full script had never been written and scenes from the full-length version may need retooling, I made the decision to halt the production after viewing the rough cuts. The Member Services Committee will need to

consider the ultimate goal for this video, how it is expected to enhance existing content, and whether continuing with production will be the best use of USCA resources. Alternative uses for the existing footage and/or means of release may also be considered.

Fall Club Mailing

The annual fall club mailing was sent out to all USCA member clubs prior to my joining the organization. In addition to "USA Curling" and "Learn to Curl" brochures, advertising materials for "The Five Elements of Curling Technique" manual and "Dare to Curl" video, and copies of the Rules of Curling poster, dedicated ice facilities received two under-ice USA Curling logos for their rinks. Arena clubs were presented with the option to request two free logos if their host arena allowed for use. While generally positive, the first group of Growth & Development surveys received in the Stevens Point office show a range of responses regarding the perceived benefits of the mailing. The Membership Committee is encouraged to consider ways to improve the usefulness of the mailing.

Report of USWCA Liaison to USCA

April 21, 2012

The United States Women's Curling Association met February 13-14, 2012 in St. Paul, MN. The following represent some of the agenda items that USCA may find of interest.

- Officers for 2012-2013 are as follows:
 - President – Bridget Matzke, Madison CC
 - 1st Vice President – Shelley Dropkin, Broomstones CC
 - 2nd Vice President – Jeannie Borland, Mayfield CC
 - Treasurer – Mary Glowacki, Bowling Green CC
 - Secretary – Dae Jean Tahnke, Madison CC
 - USWCA/USCA Liaison – Jennifer Stannard. This is a 3-year term.

- Jennifer Stannard was elected as USWCA/USCA Liaison. This is a 3-year term of office.

- Maureen Guay, President, reported that the organization must explore ways to work on the goals of USWCA outside the fall and winter meetings. With technology so advanced, virtual meetings through the Web and by conference calls allows for meeting without travel and related expense. Each committee is challenged to hold at least one virtual meeting before Fall, 2012.

- The Strategic Planning process continues. Meeting only at the Fall and Winter meetings seriously hampers the efforts of the Committee to move forward as an organization. The virtual meeting concept will greatly enhance the committee's efforts in strategic planning. To help facilitate the conference call meetings, USWCA is looking into contracting for conference call services. Input from the various committees is being sought with a goal of May 15 to begin moving forward based on the information obtained from all the virtual committee reports. The goals of the Strategic Planning Committee have not changed since the last report. A brief summary includes:
 - USWCA is the acknowledge leader of grass roots curling among youth and women of all ages;
 - USWCA is a vital resource promoting development and education for curling communities;
 - USWCA creates and fosters a national network of representatives who work toward growing the sport of curling;
 - The governance structure of USWCA makes the best use of time, talent and experience to develop future leaders and which reflects the geographic diversity;

- USWCA continues to be financially healthy and to raise the necessary funds to support its programs and priorities.

Chris Sjue met with USWCA at the Fall meeting and, based on a set of survey questions, provided the USWCA President with some input regarding its Strategic Planning Process.

- An active ad hoc committee titled Financial Advancement has been working on financial stewardship to increase revenues of the organization. The committee is working to provide Financial Stewardship for USWCA and is exploring grant possibilities, planned giving and silent auctions at the fall and winter meetings. Discussions toward making the Committee a permanent committee are underway.
- The calendar for 2012-2013 is partially confirmed. The National Bonspiel will be held at Portage Curling Club February 13-17, 2013 and will be held in conjunction with the Winter Meeting.
- The Senior Women's National Bonspiel will be held November 28-December 2, 2012 at Mayfield Curling Club in South Euclid, Ohio.
- There was a good summary of the Junior Bonspiel activity in the US Curling News. Going forward the USWCA is working on running some Junior Coaching Clinics at next year's junior bonspiels. Sites and dates will be determined by the fall meeting.
- The Senior Friendship Tour to Canada begins October 31, 2012 in Victoria, British Columbia and ends November 12th. 16 Senior USWCA women have been chosen to compete against Canadian Senior Women. In November, you will be able to follow the activities of the Tour on the website www.uswca.org.

In closing, I would like to say that it has been a privilege to serve as the USWCA/USCA Liaison for the past 6 years. I have enjoyed working with all the Board and Committee Members and look upon this time as extremely worthwhile and meaningful. I have lasting memories to pull out and think about in future years. It has been a pleasure to know each and everyone of you.

Janet Farr
USWCA/USCA Liaison