



## **Quarterly Report January - March, 2008**

The editors of Sports Events Magazine called to talk about market research and sports impacts in early January for an article they were working on for the March issue. They asked how the sports climate was in the Wenatchee Valley. The response? "I've got to wear shades!"

Following an exciting and impactful year in sports in the Wenatchee Valley in 2007, it's hard to believe that climate could continue through the winter months into 2008. But I was wrong!

Thanks to Special Olympics Winter Games, the economic impact numbers jumped off the page in the first quarter. In addition, the Sports Council branched out into a new foundation, we touted the valley at the International Bike Expo in Seattle and joined a national sports commission organization. Attempting to keep up at a jog, and sometimes a flat-out run, we turned the reins over to a new president of the Sports Council Board and updated the website while transferring the monthly newsletter over to a new format. And, a ton of media buys for the upcoming year were accomplished.

Whew! What a first quarter of 2008!!!

### **1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Economic Impact Numbers**

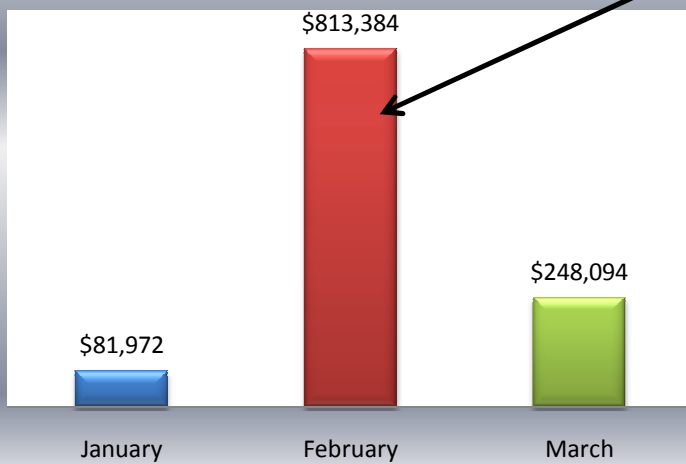
A survey of organizers in the Wenatchee Valley of 24 sports events held between January 1<sup>st</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup> found that 16,717 people participated in, watched, coached or helped put them on.

Measuring the economic impact of just those visitors involved in the 24 events, we looked at people who traveled from more than 100-miles and most likely stayed at least one night in an area hotel/motel. According to the survey, 11,550 sports tourists ventured into the Wenatchee Valley, impacting the area economy with \$1,143,450 spent directly on accommodations, food and entertainment. That compares to 7,981 first quarter

sports tourists in 2007 in the Wenatchee Valley for 21 events, impacting the economy by \$790,119.

	Local Part.	Visitor Part.	Local Coaches	Visiting Coaches	Staff/Vol.	Local Fans	Visiting Fans	Economic Impact
January	1133	526	75	32	156	485	270	\$81,972
February	1773	3001	142	415	220	1441	4800	\$813,384
March	620	1275	73	171	280	1165	1060	\$248,094
1st Quarter Totals	3,526	4,802	290	618	656	695	6,130	\$1,143,450
							16,717	

### 2008 1st Quarter Economic Impact



It should be noted that Special Olympics Winter Games played a HUGE roll in boosting the numbers.

This year, according to Special Olympics officials, over 1,500 athletes participated in the Games. In addition, the Games featured nearly 600 volunteers and over 4,000 spectators. It's no doubt that Special Olympics Winter Games is the largest, single sports event held annually in the Wenatchee Valley.

Also, considering the overwhelming majority of these athletes, volunteers and spectators were from OUTSIDE the Wenatchee Valley, Special Olympics Winter Games contributed approximately \$530,000 to the area's economy.

## Geocaching

(Wenatchee, WA)...The Wenatchee Valley Sports Council is now in charge of the Geocache site, sponsored by the Wenatchee Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau. Geocaching is a relatively new pastime where participants use GPS units to search for hidden caches.

Typically, a geocache is a small box filled with a log book to track who has visited the site as well as small trinkets. Finders of the geocache site are encouraged to place another trinket in the cache if one is removed. The Wenatchee Valley has over 120 geocache sites posted on the official Geocaching website: [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com)

If you have access to a GPS unit, the CVB cache called "Ice Age Erratics" is located at the following coordinates:

**N 47° 23.650 W 120° 16.933**

## Request For Proposals

An article which appeared in the January edition of the Wenatchee Business Journal regarding the Sports Council and estimates for the sports climate in 2008 really seemed to help our hotel requests. A portion of the article dealt with the fact that the Sports Council can help area organizers of multi-day events to obtain room blocks with area hotels during their events. As a result, the Sports Council made six new contacts.

The first quarter saw 17 requests for proposals go out to Wenatchee and East Wenatchee hotels and motels for events in 2008. In all, 2,629 room nights were requested. Seven different categories of sports genres were identified by the Wenatchee Valley Sports Council in the first quarter of 2008 that will be played in the Wenatchee Valley which required overnight stay requests:

1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter RFP Breakdown	
<u>Sport Requiring Rooms</u>	<u>Room Nights</u>
Softball (adult and youth)	852
Swimming	610
Baseball	504
Basketball	408
Lacrosse	150
Cycling	75
Soccer	30
Total	2,629

## 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Sports Council Activities

**Coaches of Inspiration - Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>** - Over 200 people attended the 3rd Annual Coaches of Inspiration Awards Ice Cream Social at the Wenatchee Convention Center. It was a special night, as 34 coaches were honored for their work and Megan Carlson provided the keynote address. Carlson, formerly Megan Franza, was a star basketball player for the University of Washington in the late '90's and led the Husky Women to the Elite Eight in 2000-2001. Legend Award Recipients included Lee Bofto, Paul Preston and Tom Rassley. Exceptional Coaching Award Recipients were: Mike Grimm - Soccer; Bob Hill - Swimming; and Greg Jones - Girls Basketball. Inspirational Coaching Award Recipients:

Baseball - Dan Bass, Charlie Brown, & Nick Harris; Basketball - Ken Boyle, Todd Fabian, & Bryan Worley; Figure Skating - Louise Kapeikis; Football - Lee Gale, Tom Nees, Rod Thomas & Mickey White; Soccer - Dwayne Birmingham, Don Carroll, Carlyne Dotter, Edwin Eaton, Brett Johnson, Vicki Lenicka, Mark Osborn, Kevin Overbay, Eric Slife, Matt Tilger, Kristin Ward, Dan Waterhouse & Mary Zontek; Softball - Eric Granstrom, Ken Krous & Darold Schall; and Volleyball - Vern Neel.

**Wenatchee Valley Sports Foundation - Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>** - The new off-shoot of the Sports Council, the Wenatchee Valley Sports Foundation, got going with its first-ever meeting in February. The 7-member board passed its bylaws and voted in its Chair (Dan Kelly), Vice-Chair (Caryl Morrell) and Secretary/Treasurer (Jennifer Korfiatis). The Foundation will take over raising money for and distributing funds in the Wenatchee Valley Sports Scholarship Fund and Charlotte Martin Fund. The Foundation's first fundraiser will be the O'Terrys Lads and Lasses co-ed softball tournament August 16-17.

**Loop Trail Extension Hearing - Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>** - The Sports Council had a good presence at a hearing on the Rocky Reach Trail Extension proposal before Douglas County Commissioners. We set up a table and distributed the *Wenatchee Valley Trips & Trails Guide*, featuring the Apple Capital Loop Trail as well as the Sports Council's *2008 Sports Events Guide* to the nearly 300 people in attendance. Director of Marketing, Eric Granstrom, was one of 40+ people to testify. He spoke in favor of the Trail Extension and how it would be a benefit to local users as well as a tourism attraction. (Commissioners later voted unanimously to approve the request for the Trail Extension)

**Sports Council Joins National Association - Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>** - The Wenatchee Valley Sports Council officially became a member of the National Association of Sports Commissions. In addition, Eric Granstrom will be traveling to the Association's national convention April 21-25 where he will attend training seminars and classes regarding sports event hosting and organizing as well as network with event owners.

**Topping Off Ceremony - March 5<sup>th</sup>** - The Sports Council was again well represented at the "Topping Off" ceremony for the Greater Wenatchee Regional Events Center. Eric Granstrom, who is also a Public Facilities District Board member, took photographs for the newsletter, signed the beam and took a hardhat tour of the site.

**International Bike Expo - March 8/9** - The Sports Council purchased a booth and promoted the Wenatchee Valley and its 12-cycling related events in Seattle. For the weekend, we handed out approximately 2,200 Sports Events Guides, 200 Visitors Guides, 200 Trips and Trails Guides and nearly 1,000 apples.

## Web & Electronic Media

**Newsletter** - The Sports Council Newsletter made the official jump to Constant Contact with the new year. Some test samples were sent out in November and December of 2007 and the Board agreed to make the switch. In the first quarter of 2008, three newsletters were emailed to a total of 2,944 recipients. Each newsletter contains

information about the Sports Council, its Board of Directors, Sports Council business as well as most things sports-related in the Wenatchee Valley. The monthly newsletter also contains a sports calendar of events with links to each.

**Website** - In an effort to continue improving and updating the Sports Council's website, biographies and pictures of the 15 Board of Directors was added to the "About Us" page in the first quarter. In addition, a static Event Calendar was added to the "Events" page as well as a link to the interactive calendar in the Wenatchee Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau website. This static calendar of the year's sports events is broken down month-by-month and includes dates, contact information and a hyperlink to the events' website.

It was determined the interactive calendar through the CVB's site was not a searchable database. As a result, in order to connect with users of Google or Yahoo, for example, the static page was created to allow additional "hits" from search engine sites. This adds to the "traceability" of web visitors.

**Google Analytics** - According to Google Analytics tracking of the Sports Council's website, nearly all pages of the site were up in views from the previous quarter. The website received 2,457 visits between January 1<sup>st</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup>. 76% of those were new visits. The Sports Facilities Index remains the most-viewed page on the site, receiving 1,337 views in the first quarter, up 24% from the fourth quarter of 2007. The biggest jump in viewing was on the Sports Contacts page, where 60% more page views occurred in the first quarter vs. the last quarter of last year. That probably has to do with registrations and sign-ups for spring sports leagues taking place in January and February. Search engines still remain the number one way web browsers find the Sports Council's site, 65% of which in the first quarter of 2008.

## Summary

While the first three months of a new year typically seem to be slow, such was not the case for the Wenatchee Valley Sports Council. Caryl Morrell has stepped in as Board President, we've created a new Foundation and continued to "build the brand" of sports in the Wenatchee Valley. The not-too-distant future is exceptionally bright for all sports enthusiasts in the area. With the Events Center construction reaching a climax, the talk of a new sportsplex in East Wenatchee, and the possibility of additional sports fields in Wenatchee, it's an exciting time to be where we are.