



Quarterly Report July - September, 2008

If staying on top of projects, marketing, website development, newsletters and the Sports Foundation wasn't enough, throw in a softball tournament and a blimp on top of the third quarter and this director of marketing was B U S Y ! And, despite a downturn in the national economy and fears in the Northwest, the Wenatchee Valley Sports market continued to chug along through the summer and ramped up at quarter's end with the opening of the new Town Toyota Center.

Following a visit by the Washington Association of Sports Commissions in Wenatchee in June, the Sports Council office continued its focus on acting as liaison between local event organizers and hotels, those wishing to locate sports events in the Wenatchee Valley in the future and working with management of the new Town Toyota Center on specific events coming up this winter.

The construction of the Town Toyota Center and its pending completion grabbed the attention of national sports events magazines this summer, in which the Sports Council took advantage of ad placements adjacent to articles. The Visitors Bureau and Sports Council combined resources again on our own publications in preparing the Winter Guide and Visitors Guide. Over the airwaves, we continued our emphasis on outdoor recreation and fishing opportunities in North Central Washington. Speaking of which, we continued our involvement with a local marketing effort to focus on the Vancouver Olympics in 2010.

The effort to reach out electronically continued this summer via the Sports Council website and newsletter. Improvements to the website included a new look to the front page and the interactive camping, fishing and golfing map. Over 3,500 readers received sports news of the Wenatchee Valley via the monthly newsletter this summer, including news about the naming rights of the Events Center and a sockeye fishery on Lake Wenatchee.

So summer was a blur and fall is here as the Sports Council continues to buzz along planning for 2009 with a fervor and enthusiasm that hopefully matches the sports tidal swell that is brimming throughout the Wenatchee Valley.

Projects

33rd O'Terry's Lads & Lasses Softball Tournament - 37 teams participated in the annual fundraiser for the Wenatchee Valley Sports Foundation. The Sports Council helped facilitate the tournament, including promoting, taking registrations and organizing the tournament. All told, the tournament netted \$2,917.61 for the Sports Foundation.

Washington State Winter Games - Representatives from various winter sports venues and organizations met July 30th to discuss having Wenatchee host the State Winter Games in 2009. Present were: Jerri Barkley of Mission Ridge; Louise Kapeikis and Karen Boyce of Wenatchee Figure Skating; Rob Cline of Wenatchee Youth Hockey and the Greater Wenatchee Regional Events Center; Julie Tarbert of Wenatchee Banshees Women's Hockey; and yours truly. It was decided by the group that 2009 would be too soon to turn around and properly prepare for a winter games. Interest is still very high in having Wenatchee host the State Winter Games, so a proposal was brought forward to explore the possibility of hosting in January of 2010.

Helium Blimp - While preparing for the Ski Fever show in October, an idea was hatched to vividly represent the "300 days of sunshine" theme touted by the Wenatchee Valley Visitors Bureau...purchase a helium blimp. The theme for the Bureau's booth would incorporate the sunshine, blue skies, skiing and new logo. Upon further investigation and pricing, an order was placed with Above & Beyond Balloons of Irvine, California for an 8-foot diameter, helium-filled balloon.



NCW High School Showcase - Rob Cline, General Manager of the Town Toyota Center, visited the Sports Council in April and expressed his interest in a high school basketball showcase in the new arena. He also asked if the Sports Council would be interested in being involved. At its meeting in September, the Sports Council Executive Board decided to undertake the task of providing volunteers for ushers and ticket-takers as well as host the VIP room at the North Central Washington High School Basketball Showcase December 11-13.

Kite Flyers in Wenatchee - An August phone call to the Sports Council office began a series of events that could land the American Kiteflyers Association National Conference in Wenatchee in 2010. A gentleman in the area for other business contacted the Sports Council regarding his past-time and involvement with the AKA. The Sports Council office and Visitors Bureau office worked hand-in-hand in providing a bid package to the AKA. According to the AKA representative, Wenatchee has made it to a short-list of possibly host-cities including Seaside, Oregon and San Diego, California. We're expecting to know by the end of the year whether Wenatchee will host the AKA in 2010.

Marketing

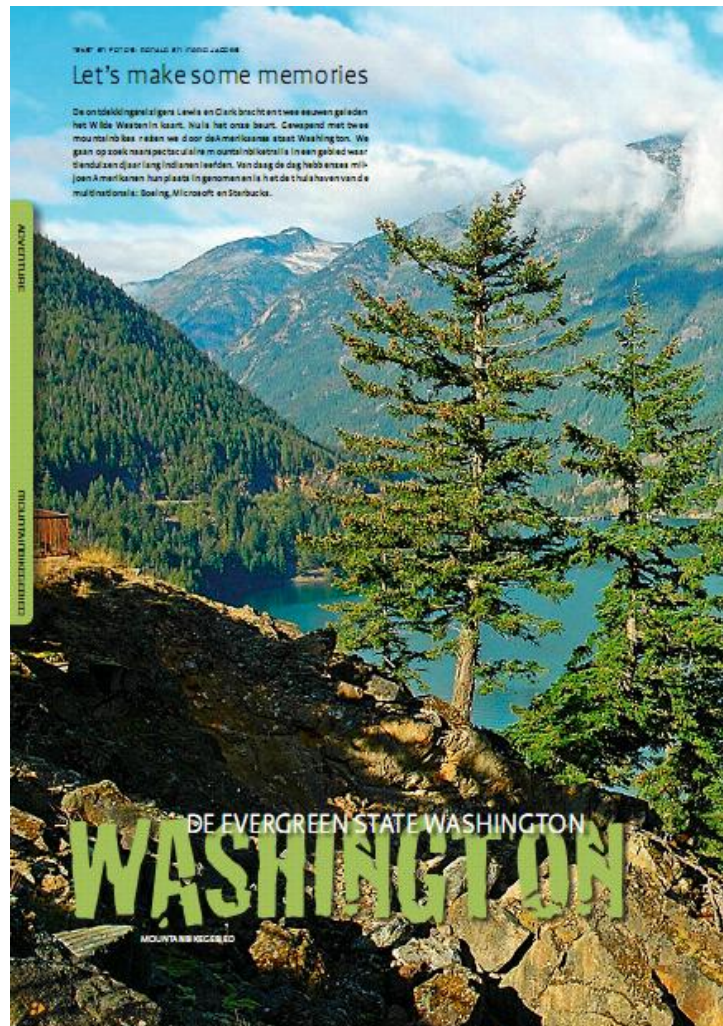
Sports Destination Management Magazine - Catching wind of the near-completion of the Town Toyota Center, this national publication contacted the Sports Council about an article it was writing about concerning winter recreation with snow and ice sports. The Sports Council placed a half-page advertorial and used a new marketing company in Wenatchee, APT Design and Brad Fitzgerald to come up with something a little different.



Sports Events Magazine - Not to be outdone, Sports Events Magazine's December issue was to be about construction and renovations of sports facilities across the country and the editor wanted to include information about the Town Toyota Center. So the Sports Council also purchased a half-page ad for the issue, which is also their guide to sports commissions and councils around the country.

Winter Guide & 2009 Visitors Guide - The Sports Council helped provide a calendar of events for both the Town Toyota Center and Mission Ridge to be included in the newest edition of the Wenatchee Valley Winter Guide. The Town Toyota Center was also a new feature to add to the 2009 Visitors Guide, due out in February.

Bike Freak Magazine - Efforts to provide travelling writers good information about Devil's Gulch came to fruition in late June with the spring edition of Bike Freak Magazine. This publication from the Netherlands featured an entire section of mountain biking the Northwest United States, including Devil's Gulch and the Wenatchee National Forest. The photography proved breathtaking and article insightful and the Sports Council owes a debt to David Stipe, a local rider who took the article author on a tour of Devil's Gulch via mountain bike.



Radio Advertising - Our marketing effort continued on Dave Graybill's show on KVI in Seattle with the emphasis being on fishing and outdoor recreation. July's ad focused on salmon fishing and enjoying the sunshine of the Wenatchee Valley. August was aimed at the Wenatchee Valley being an end-of-summer destination while September focused on harvest time, the Taste of the Harvest Festival in downtown Wenatchee, biking and fall fishing. Budgeting for 2009, we also plan to place a banner advertisement on Dave's website (www.fishingmagician.com) as well as place advertisements in the Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife's fishing and hunting pamphlets.

Electronic Communication

Following the debut of the interactive fishing, camping, golfing map in June, efforts continued in the third quarter to fine tune both the map as well as the entire Sports

Council website. We redesigned the home page of the website to look a little friendlier with a welcome message from our Board President Caryl Morrell. We also moved around the front page links and information so it mostly appeared “above the fold.”

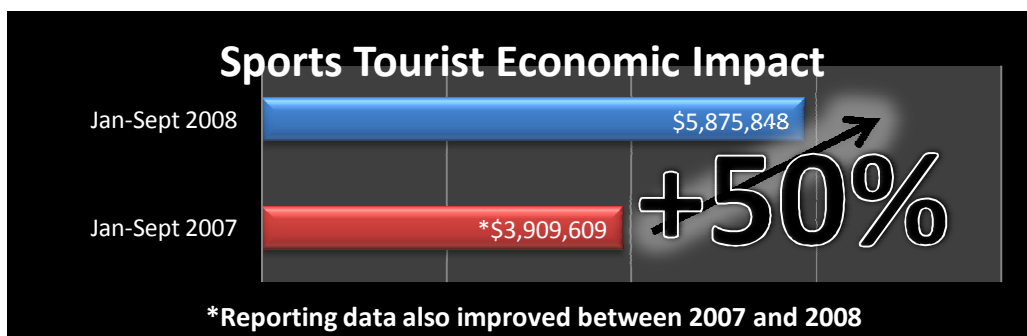
Checking website statistics with Google Analytics™, website traffic was down slightly for the summer months of 2008 versus 2007, but page views, page visits and time spent on the site all improved. Specifically, 2,460 web-users visited the Sports Council website between July and the end of September, down from 2,557 over the same period in 2007. Page views were up 3.3% to 5,087 while time spent on the site was up 11.3% over last year to one-minute, twenty-one seconds average. The goal for the upcoming year is to get more links for the Sports Council website with other websites around North Central Washington. The good news, according to Google Analytics™, is that direct traffic sources, meaning those who typed in www.wenatcheevalleysports.com in their web browser, was up nearly 57% in the third quarter of 2008 to 335 over 214 in 2007.

The Sports Council Newsletter took on a somewhat new look in the summer quarter with a different template used through Constant Contact. Over the three months ending in September, 3,530 people received the latest information on sports in the Wenatchee Valley through the monthly newsletter. It was in the newsletter that recipients learned more information about the sockeye fishery opening on Lake Wenatchee, a naming rights sponsor of the Regional Events Center (Town Toyota) and an exclusive interview with Dan Kelly about his near-death bicycle accident.

Impact Numbers

Measuring one year against another is still not quite fair yet because of the inadequacies in reporting in the Sports Council’s first year of tracking in 2007. However, using the numbers of one year against another can still denote the overall economic impact of sports tourism on the Wenatchee Valley economy. That being said, it’s still interesting to find that the overall impact numbers from the third quarter of 2008 are down 13% from the same period in 2007.

Over 38 sports events between July 1st and September 30th, a total of 6,703 sports tourists came to the Wenatchee Valley. All told, their input meant \$1.35-million directly into the area’s economy. Comparatively speaking, sports tourists brought \$1.52-million into the valley’s economy in 2007. For the year, over 36,000 sports tourists have contributed \$5.87-million to the local economy.



Request For Proposal

The Sports Council assisted six organizations and teams with hotel room block requests in the third quarter. The various events were for the near and distant future, requiring a total of 1,297 room nights.

3rd Quarter RFP Breakdown

<u>Sport Requiring Rooms</u>	<u>Room Nights</u>
Girls Basketball (AAU)	600
Men's Softball (NSA)	312
Boy's Baseball (Legion)	285
Women's Hockey (Hot Autumn)	60
<u>Girl's Softball (Sterling Invite)</u>	<u>40</u>
Total	1,297

Third quarter sports events required a total of 12,615 room nights to accommodate 6,703 sports tourists. Year-to-date totals for room nights through three quarters are 58,304 room nights for 36,127 sports tourists.

Sports Foundation

The Wenatchee Valley Sports Foundation enjoyed the addition of a new website in June at www.wvsportsfoundation.org. It proved a valuable tool for providing information to teams in the O'Terry's tournament, brackets and following the tournament, photos.

The Foundation also voted on a distribution schedule, allocating \$3,500 in grant funding per quarter, with a month-long application period in February, May, August and November. The Foundation took in the \$2,917.61 from the O'Terry's tournament, and then added another \$250 from the Red Lion Inn as a rebate per hotel room of teams participating in the tournament. Arlberg Sports contributed another \$1,000 in proceeds from the Tour deVine bike ride in September. Total monies held in three accounts, two of which at the Community Foundation of North Central Washington and the other at People's Bank, is currently \$15,633.58.

The Sports Foundation Board also voted in the summer quarter to provide scholarship money to teams participating in the NCW High School Basketball Showcase in December. A total of \$2,000 has been allocated to be split among teams participating with the Foundation working on an award concept that would provide a chance for schools to win the money by means OTHER than winning games.

Summary

So what was expected to be a somewhat slower time over the three summer months proved to be incredibly busy. The job of the Sports Council to help facilitate locals hosting events, assist those trying to create other events, act as liaison between sports groups and hoteliers, and promote sports events outside the area continued in the third quarter of 2008. In addition, the task of tracking those sports events and resulting impact on the area's economy improves with each month that goes by and with the further understanding of local groups of the importance of this research. Added promotion within the Wenatchee Valley of Sports Council and Sports Foundation activities helps to remind area residents and businesses how important the sports tourism business is to our economy and why tournament-quality fields, courts and facilities are needed.

The year to come will prove to be intriguing in the face of a national economic downturn. Typically, extra-curricular activities are curtailed in the face of hard times, but the Wenatchee Valley has been insulated from the downturn, at least so far. Hopefully, the trend will continue toward providing quality sports events that take advantage of the Wenatchee Valley's great weather, wonderful people and incredible facilities. It is the Sports Council's quest to help facilitate this goal however possible.