



Quarterly Report April - June, 2011

Special Olympics Winter Games took center stage for the Sports Council during the 2nd quarter of this year. The state committee sent a letter to the community in early April saying it was taking the Games out of Wenatchee because of increasing facility costs and would put it out to bid to other communities. The Sports Council stepped in and negotiated on behalf of the community with Special Olympics Washington and secured a Memorandum of Understanding to continue the Games through 2016. In doing so, the Wenatchee Valley Sports Foundation stepped forward to create a fund to help offset facility costs by collecting approximately \$30,000 a year over the 5-year agreement. The Sports Council went out and secured the majority of the funding through asks of the Port of Chelan County; Port of Douglas County; Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce; Wenatchee Tourism Promotion Assessment Commission; and various service clubs of the Wenatchee Valley. By quarter's end, five-year commitments were put in place and the agreement was signed to continue the Winter Games in the Wenatchee Valley for the foreseeable future.

While the Sports Council was waging a battle to keep Special Olympics in town, behind the scenes, it was also waging a battle for its very existence. As a member of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC), the Sports Council explored best-use scenarios for the City of Wenatchee's monies received from hotel-motel taxes. Over the course of 13-meetings in six months, the LTAC examined a myriad of ways the City could utilize these resources. On the line for the Visitors Bureau and Sports Council was approximately 83-percent of its funding. Should LTAC or the City decide the money should go elsewhere, it would basically put the Visitors Bureau and Sports Council out of business. At the end of its exhaustive research, the committee on June 16th recommended to City Council that it seek a 5-year contract for tourism and marketing services with the Wenatchee Valley Visitors Bureau and Sports Council. However, as this report is being compiled, the City has yet to make a decision or give any direction on the matter.

In great correlation to the City's lack of direction in the matter of future funding for the Visitors Bureau and Sports Council, the Director of Marketing for the Sports Council announced in late June that he would be leaving in August to take a job as Program Director for Columbia River Media Group in Wenatchee. The Sports Council Board of

Directors is weighing its future options while awaiting a decision from the City of Wenatchee.

2nd Quarter Economic Impact Numbers

While the second quarter economic impact numbers for sports tourism were off slightly from 2010 figures, the Wenatchee Valley is up 5% over last year as a whole. Thanks to a significant first quarter impact of \$2.3-million (up 39% over 2010), the dip from year-to-year for the second quarter of 2011 (down 11%) evens things out nicely. All told, 49 sports events in the second, three-month period of the year drew a total of 18,599 sports tourists to the Wenatchee Valley, resulting in an estimated economic impact of \$2,987,102. That compares with an impact of \$3,364,545 for the 2nd quarter of 2010. Year to date, 79 sports events have drawn 33,497 sports tourists for an estimated economic impact of \$5.3-million.

	Visiting Participants	Visiting Coaches	Visiting Fans	Room Night Factor	Economic Impact
April	2,648	190	4,078	3,534	\$1,034,550
May	2,189	170	2,855	4,068	\$918,918
June	2,704	169	3,596	3,972	\$1,033,634
1st Quarter Totals	7,541	529	10,529	11,574	\$2,987,102

There were some troubling things on the horizon, with quite a few baseball tournaments cancelling as well approached the end of the 2nd quarter and began summer. According to tournament organizers, the glut of too many offerings around the Northwest caused many of them to cancel their tournaments scheduled for the Wenatchee Valley due to a lack of participants. This will no doubt have a negative impact on 3rd quarter numbers as we go ahead.

2nd Quarter Sports Council Activities

Bringing in the New - The 2nd quarter of 2011 meant new faces, familiar names, and longtime members moving on for the Sports Council Board of Directors. First, Vice President Sally Brawley (joined April '03) accepted the position as Executive Director of the Eastmont Metropolitan Parks District, leaving as director of the Mission Ridge Ski School. Kari Johnson replaced her representing Mission Ridge on the SC Board. Then, longtime member Mark Madland (joined Nov. '04) stepped down and was replaced by Gary Looney, representing youth baseball. Our own sports historian Bruce Bennett (joined June '07) decided to leave the board and was replaced in his at-large position by Paul Thornton, Manager of Red Lion Hotel. Unfortunately for the Sports Council, before Paul could even get his ears wet, he was promoted by Red Lion to manage their property at Disneyland in Anaheim, so the SC Board is seeking his replacement. Finally, at quarter's end, Marco Azurdia announced he was leaving Wenatchee Valley College to take on the position of Executive Director of the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges in Vancouver, WA. It was anticipated that Greg Franz, taking over

Marco's duties as Athletic Director at WVC, would replace Marco on the Sports Council Board of Directors.

Special Olympics Winter Games - As was mentioned in the opening of this report, the Sports Council grabbed the torch lit by a groundswell of support from the community and led the way to establish a Memorandum of Understanding to continue the Winter Games in the Wenatchee Valley through 2016. The Sports Foundation would act as the caretaker of all monies collected each year and use it to cover local facility costs.

Live 4 Adventure Race - The Sports Council and Sports Foundation worked with Michael and Heather Hansen and a group of volunteers to put on the first-ever Live 4 Adventure Race May 21st at the Apple Bowl. The event was designed to be a fundraiser to support extra-curricular activities in area schools through parent teacher organizations. 40 teams competed in the multi-stage event and \$16,000 was awarded to 15 area schools PTA's and PTO's. The Foundation served as the umbrella non-profit organization for the event, which is expected to grow immensely in the future. The Sports Council's Director of Marketing created and maintained the website www.live4adventure.org and served as the event's bookkeeper.

Coaches of Inspiration Awards - After a year hiatus, the Sports Council and Foundation brought back the Coaches of Inspiration Awards. Nominations were accepted through the Sports Council office with 24 coaches honored for their volunteer and coaching work throughout North Central Washington. An ice cream social celebration was held in their honor May 26th at the Wenatchee Community Center, where 22 of the 24 coaches appeared with about 140 well-wishers.

Monthly Meeting Change - The Sports Council Board of Directors amended its bylaws at its annual meeting in 2011 to meet as a whole every other month. In addition, the Executive Committee, made up of the President, Vice President, Secretary and Director of Marketing, would continue to meet every third Tuesday at Noon. Pressing needs facing the SC Board did not allow it to go to the every-other-month schedule until June. The entire board is now scheduled to convene in July, September and November this year. Of course, anything needing immediate attention can be brought before the board at a special meeting at any time.

Director Activities

Thunder Swamp - The Director of Marketing continues to serve as co-chair of the Thunder Swamp Sprint Boat Race in East Wenatchee, with two race dates set for July 9th and August 13th. In addition, he is the webmaster, media liaison and creative leader of Thunder Swamp. He led the committee to adopt an alligator as its mascot with a "Name That Mascot" contest, eliciting 60 name submissions. The SC Director of Marketing also started a Facebook page for Thunder Swamp in June, which quickly overtook the Sports Council's FB page in "likes."

Lodging Tax Advisory Committee - The Director of Marketing continued to lend his voice to the process of advising the City of Wenatchee on best-uses for hotel-motel tax dollars. It became apparent in the months leading up to a final recommendation that no

matter the Committee's advice, the City may choose to go another direction. The committee's final recommendation, worded strongly to City Council, was to seek a five-year contract for tourism and marketing services with the Visitors Bureau. At report time, the City had yet to provide any direction on its decision.

Web & Electronic Media

Newsletter - 25,867 people received the weekly weekend sports reminders and monthly newsletters in the second three months of 2011. The "click-throughs" saw a drastic improvement over the second quarter, with a 39% jump. That means readers of the newsletters and reminders are clicking to go through to another website for information about a particular event. So, when those websites look at their data, they'll see an increase in "referrals" from the Sports Council.

Facebook/Twitter - While activity was somewhat slow for the Sports Council's Facebook page, other pages created by the Sports Council were very popular. Specifically, Thunder Swamp. In just four weeks following its creation, the Thunder Swamp Facebook page outpaced the Sports Council's page for "likes." By the end of June, the Thunder Swamp page had over 200 likes, to the Sports Council's 195. The Sports Council also created and maintained Facebook Pages for the O'Terry's Softball Tournament and Live 4 Adventure Race. In all, Sports Council-related Facebook pages garnered 493 "likes", received 18,444 post views and 103 post feedbacks.

A great new feature on the Sports Council's website is the ability to instantly post articles to Facebook and Twitter. The Sports Council's Twitter account now has 61 followers and has tracked 181 Tweets.

Website - Traffic to the Sports Council's website is continuing to cook right along, with a one percent increase for the second quarter of 2011 versus the same period of last year. A total of 4,866 visitors came to the website over the three months and viewed 9,754 pages. The web traffic was up significantly from the 1st quarter of the year (27%), when 3,523 visitors viewed the site. A new calendar feature for the website which allows visitors to download the entire schedule to their Outlook calendar should be a popular option.

Summary

The Wenatchee Valley Sports Council continues to provide an incredibly valuable service to the sports interests locally and abroad. It has become the voice of all things sports in the Wenatchee Valley and a clearing house of information through its website and Director of Marketing. It proved extremely valuable in negotiating a settlement to continue the Special Olympics Winter Games in the Wenatchee Valley and continues to be a valuable source for local sports organizations, facility owners and governments alike. Sports Tourism brought in \$5.3-million to the Wenatchee Valley economy in the first half of this year. It's a viable industry in trying times. And the Sports Council is a leader promoting all facets of sports tourism.