

President's Report
February 10, 2010

I want to thank you all for your attendance at this meeting, while some are struggling to get here for the bonspiel a number of you had challenges arriving for this meeting and, I thank you. We need the input from all members of the USWCA to make decisions that will work the best for all of us.

This year has been a busy one. Our new website garnered praise from many corners. As requests and modifications were noted they were addressed, thanks to Casey Kremer for her efforts.

I have responded to correspondence regarding the statement on our website as to the USWCA being the oldest national curling organization. While we are the oldest current national curling organization, the GNCC was the first national curling body although some years ago it became a regional organization.

An inquiry as to club representation at this meeting was made relative to club assignment of an alternate. It is specifically referenced as allowed in the USWCA bylaws, which I referenced in my response to the club and, our Parliamentarian confirmed.

A concern was raised by a representative regarding the 5 and under Open event. The suggestion was to require female Skips in the USWCA Open bonspiel. My response pointed to past discussions in committee and by the board of Directors. The goal of the 5 and Under Open event is to encourage grassroots curling and provide an option in areas where women's events are currently untenable. The 5 and Under Women's Challenge is available for women only.

Ice quality and the USWCA's value of such was questioned with regard to a 4 sheet club. I responded that while a challenge, past experience indicates that the ice maintenance can be performed between the draws. I assured the writer that the USWCA is committed to quality ice.

I attended the opening luncheon for the Friendship Tour in Milwaukee. The games got off to a good start and it was clear that Barb Hamm & Janet Farr would make the tour a solid success.

So, a busy year and the upcoming year will be as well. We are poised for the Olympics and the expected wave of interest with hopes that our clubs will see significant growth as a result. Curling is 'on the bubble' as the basketball folk would say.

We sent a letter of congratulations and well wishes to the US Women's Curling Team with USWCA 2010 pins for each of them and a USWCA pal pin for Coach Wally Henry. I am sure that they will represent us well.

Last Fall I mentioned that our organization is at a turning point. The Olympic exposure has brought us new curlers who are focused on the athleticism and competition exemplified by the Olympics. We are working to provide opportunities and services for our member clubs and curlers what will answer the oft asked question, "Why the USWCA".

We are challenged financially, with a number of clubs experiencing shrinking membership and with budgets tight across the country. We need to be creative and look for new sources of income. Our goal is to grow women's curling and grassroots efforts; while the financial environment is a difficult one it is not the time to 'pull in' to ourselves. We need to grow or, we will wither so we need to roll up our sleeves and be creative. Expand the profile of the USWCA at your clubs- promote the various events- encourage 5 and under curlers to compete- support the new events & activities- sell the pins and merchandise and look for creative ways that we might meet our needs and grow this wonderful sport and organization.

Jennifer Stannard
President