

Maples Recreation Association Incorporated

Annual General Meeting

May 29, 2011

President's Report

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I'd like to welcome you to the 2011 Annual General Meeting of the Maples Recreation Association Incorporated (MRAI). I regret that I cannot personally be in attendance today. However, I trust as this report is read you will appreciate both the dedication and tireless efforts of the Board of Directors. The hard work of this team of leaders cannot be overstated; they have faced many difficult and challenging situations and risen to meet each one capably.

The MRAI reported last year that Maples Collegiate Principal Kirk Baldwin had solicited the support of the Seven Oaks School Division to partner in funding with the MRAI to accomplish a track and field improvement for our joint use. The efforts of Member of Parliament Joy Smith secured federal funding for the project, while meetings with Minister Jim Rondeau MLA enabled provincial funding. Now that the snow is melted and the rains have subsided it is evident that the project is nearing completion. Board of Director member Derek Balagus has been diligent as our project manager and representative reviewing all aspects of the project on our behalf. We continue to be grateful and look forward to the time the track and field are put in full use.

Our Board authorized and circulated an electronic community survey as part of feasibility study for the expansion and improvements to the facilities governed by the MRAI. More than 300 replies were received, and our Board has been in discussion with the General Council of Winnipeg Committee Centers (GCWCC) to plan and begin expanding to meet the growing needs of our community. The website at Maplecc.ca has fast become our most effective way of communicating with the membership. The site is being updated regularly and a calendar of events has insured that anyone wishing to use our center can verify the availability and capacity without having to make contact with anyone directly. This fact is proved out in the 30 % increase in contract use of the facility.

The MRAI again contracted the expertise of Tom Barak as our marketing and fundraising agent. Tom continued to solicit corporate sponsorships in the way of advertising revenues, and public funding by lobbying all three levels of government for grant money. The result of his efforts include funding for significant improvements to the Elwick Community Centre site outdoor basketball and tennis courts; funding for roadside sign at the center; funding for bathroom and lighting renovations; funding for a daytime club supervisor for the summer months; a grant from the Royal Bank of Canada for cricket batting cages at the Elwick site, and many other negotiations for sources of revenue.

Our KidsPro series of camps continues to be an innovative and popular event which we intend to grow upon. The overwhelming interest in the baseball camp with the Winnipeg Goldeyes, resulted in turning away many youth due to size restrictions. Our basketball camp took place with the Minnesota Timberwolves Pro basketball team in Minneapolis Minnesota. We are grateful to Tom Barak, Lisa Jitoboh, and Deric Balagus for their leadership in this unique and exciting opportunity for our community's kids.

Unfortunately, our Bingo program had been suspended this year pending the discovery of new bondable volunteers and a business plan to make it a profitable undertaking.

Our Association, however, has enhanced senior programming by partnering with the Seven Oaks Senior Links (SOSL) to provide expanded free activities at center. This program precipitates the need for greater accessibility to and dedicated space for the many seniors attending our center.

From time to time, groups such as the Board of Directors groom and promote leaders from within one organization to a position of leadership with greater scope in another. Such is the case for our Cricket Director, Derek Debee, who was elected as a City of Winnipeg School Trustee. We hope in his continued success.

I am especially pleased that our board has always sought to encourage and acknowledge the efforts of all of our volunteers and host an annual appreciation night. Five years ago, the inauguration of the Volunteer of the Year Award was deemed necessary to recognize the outstanding contribution of volunteers who excel in sacrificially giving of themselves for the benefit of others. This short but distinguished list of volunteers was intended to distinguish the highest standard of the spirit of volunteerism, and set an example for our peers. We continue to proudly recognize individuals whose time and talents have immensely benefited and improved the quality of programming and service at the MRAI. Inductees include Jamie Reyes, Adam Tocci, Dan Ricard and Deric Balagus. On Friday evening, special acknowledgment was shown to Brian McGhee at our annual volunteer appreciation event, when he was inducted as our 2010-2011 outstanding Volunteer of the Year. Congratulations to Brian and his family, and

thank you for your excellent efforts – you've made a noticeable difference and we applaud your dedication to your community.

Finally, I trust you will notice that our Board of Directors is composed of dedicated, talented and outstanding individuals. I can truly say that my success as President of the MRAI was entirely due to the exceptional cast of characters that surrounded me. I consider it an honour to have volunteered and worked with the MRAI for more than a decade. It is difficult to summarize my experiences as a volunteer except to recall the many struggles we have been forced to overcome – and the cooperation and tenacity with which each problem was faced.

The "secret" of our success has been each one of you – our friends and neighbours. We have always been able to find and add gifted and able people to our team, and they (you) in turn used your collective maturity and wisdom to discover needed resolutions. I am indebted to every one of those over the years for their endless support and faith in me as a leader, and have endeavoured in turn to serve this Association to the best of my ability with integrity, understanding and kindness. I expect you will understand that my decision to not continue as President was difficult; but, I believe it is in the best interest of the MRAI that new leadership be solicited.

I have recognized my own limitations and hope that through the succession of a new President our board may rise to a new level of accomplishment and achieve greater things with the foundation that has been laid. This change is necessary if our organization is to continue deepening its ability to take on new challenges, and I accept it. I have on many occasions stated that it has always been my hope to leave the Maples Community Center a better place than I had found it. I believe that the ground work we have laid together is making our community a better place to live, and that's the only legacy I have desired.

I want to extend my best wishes for the future to each of you all and close by stating that together we have been "Making memories that will last a lifetime".

Sincerely,

Dan Ricard
(President MRAI)