January 2020 Article For Local Athlete Reporter Mike Oswald

It’s officially the roaring 20’s! Special Olympics on the Sunshine Coast just keeps rockin’!

Our Winter Banquet was a flawless event, held of course at The Sechelt Legion. There was a feast prepared by Chef Greg Petula, music from DJ Mike O and even a visit from The Big Red Guy, who brought joy, smiles and best of all presents for all athletes.

The spirit of giving was also strong with others in attendance. Jordan McCourt and Paul Lith both made generous donations that will be sure to fund SOSC into this new-year.

The time of regional qualifiers is upon us. This begins anew the 4-year cycle for regional, provincial, national and world competitions. Members of the Orcas swim team will be travelling to Simon Frasier University for their competition on Sunday, January 26, 2020, which now includes the option for 800m and 1500m races! Track and field regionals are set for Swanguard May 23rd.

Bill Climie, a Special O curling coach for 13 years on the Coast, has retired. He first discovered S.O while living in Unionville, Ontario at a playoff bonspiel, “One of the finals was between two Special O teams and I was so impressed with their enthusiasm and joy of the game that I determined then, that if an opportunity to get involved presented itself, I would certainly sign up.”

When Bill moved to the Sunshine Coast, he became President of the Gibsons Curling Cup in 2006. “One day, speaking with Bob Ware, I became aware that the local Special O gang had lost one of their sports when the bowling alley closed. I asked Bob if he thought that they might be interested in curling. He explored our offer with the executive, and they were in favour of trying it. So, along with a half a dozen other volunteers I became one of the coaches.”

Some memories that stick with Bill are, “be our annual participation in the Abbotsford Bonspiel each January, where we got to meet and compete against a lot of teams from across the Lower Mainland; and our annual year-end Goofy Hat Day, where we all wear unusual head attire as we curl.”

Bill first became interested in curling when he was attending high school, “Vancouver at Magee High School. It was an option in our Physical Education course. I took it and loved it. Some years later, I met my wife at an Esso bonspiel and we've been together for 55 years now.”

“Future curling coaches, who love and understand the game, will enjoy passing their knowledge on to an enthusiastic group of athletes who are in our Special Olympics programs. You will gain much more than you give.”

Thank you Bill for all you have done for Special Olympics Sunshine Coast!

2020, the year of SOSC!