**2016 Skate Canada Ice Summit**

**May 24 – 28, 2016**

**St. John’s NL**

After 2 days of traveling, I arrived in St. John’s and was immediately aware of how different that Island was as compared to ours. The terrain is mainly rock, with lots of lakes, and few trees or vegetation. We were fortunate to be able to explore the area immediately around St John’s but it is an area I would like to see again and to explore the whole island.

We started the ACGM activities the day after we arrived, with a LOC event – a visit to Cape Spear (the farthest Eastern point on the North American continent), a trip to Signal Hill, followed by a kitchen party. Although the weather was dreadful so we couldn’t see much, the touristy part of the evening was memorable as we traveled by party bus. It is definitely the first time that most of us had been on a party bus! The kitchen party was at a brewery called Quidi Vidi, which is famous for beer brewed with water from icebergs that are 25,000 years old. There was some local entertainment as well.

Thursday night was the opening reception, with Elvis Stoiko as the guest speaker, followed by a networking session. It was great to renew friendships with skating family friends from across the country.

The workshops started on Friday morning. First, I went to the finance presentation by the new Skate Canada COO, Debra Armstrong. It was a hard year financially for Skate Canada, resulting in terminations for 12 employees, some of who had 20 + years seniority and the sale of the SC building. There were lots of tough questions for Debra and it will be interesting to see the financial statements generated from the current year.

My next workshop was titled “Maximizing a Skater’s Potential Score: A Judge’s Point of View” by 4 ISU judges. This was a variation on a skater math presentation that I have given, so it was very interesting to get the perspective as it applies to higher level skaters.

My last workshop was “Recruiting and Retention of Officials”, which was very interesting. There is a pamphlet that explains the path to becoming judges/evaluators, technical panel officials, Data specialists and STAR 1 – 4 judges. It appears that the training of judges will change greatly in the upcoming seasons, which will enable candidates to move through the system quickly.

Friday night was the awards banquet and it was a very special night for BC, seeing Gail Weber as our award winner. Congratulations Gail!

Saturday was the actual ACGM. The agenda item that was most discussed was the amalgamation of the 4 Ontario Sections into one entity. If this was not done, skaters would be unable to compete in Ontario Provincial competitions and the Sections would lose approximately $1,000,000 each year in provincial funding. The WOS Section was against the proposal but the other 3 Sections were proponents of it. The proposal passed. For elections, Janice Hunter was acclaimed as Western Director, Sylvain Guibord as Quebec Director and Paul McIntosh as the Coach Director. There were 5 people running for 3 positions on the Board of Directors and the only 3 with skating backgrounds (Kristy Balkwill, Shae Zukiwsky and Rod Garassino) were elected. The location for the 2017 Ice Summit has not be finalized.

On the Sunday, several delegates stayed and took an iceberg cruise. However, there was a strong Nor’Easter storm so it became a harbor cruise with a brief foray into open waters, much to the chagrin of several passengers. Needless to say, we did not see any icebergs or puffins, which was disappointing.

Many thanks to the NL Section for hosting an amazing event and I personally would like to thank the VI Region for the financial assistance given for me to attend.