



VOLUNTEER WALL OF FAME

Jim Burbee, BC



1. What type of organizations do you volunteer for?

Like many people, I volunteer mostly for sports organizations that our children have participated in over the years. These were several but the main focus quickly gravitated to Nordic skiing and what is now the Caledonia Nordic Ski Club (formerly Hickory Wing). After a few years of involvement as leader and coordinator of the club jackrabbit program the balance of my coaching years were spent as head coach of the Caledonia Nordic Junior Racers and some time as guide for a visually impaired skier. After fifteen years coaching and a short break to start up a new business I began officiating by volunteering for the 2005 Ski Nationals at the Otway Nordic Centre in Prince George. This in turn led to involvement in officials training for the 2010 Olympics & Paralympics and a board position with the club as director of competitions – both of which offered many new challenges. Spare time during the Olympics (as if there were any) was spent building a budget for the 2015 Canada Winter Games bid which in turn has led to what has become a full time volunteer commitment to construction of a FIS homologated Nordic facility at Otway and sport leader for Cross Country Skiing at the 2015 games. Other volunteer commitments at present include Northern Zone Chair for Cross Country BC and several club committees of the board including competitions, finance, governance and ski trails. The focus has definitely been depth verses breadth resulting in level three accreditations for both coaching and officiating.

2. What is the most rewarding part about volunteering?

Working with youth in an environment that encourages family involvement has been a ton of fun and at times exhilarating, but the most rewarding part of my experience by far has been the opportunity to motivate young skiers and help them achieve their own goals. I found that management skills learned in business transition well to sport and over my term of coaching

involvement the jackrabbit program grew from a dozen participants at inception to over two hundred and the junior racers doubled in numbers. I believe that sport teaches life skills and I had the good fortune to contribute to the next generation of young adults that will take over where we leave off. Training to compete or just learning to ski well and enable enjoyment of a healthy lifestyle both require a degree of self-motivation and discipline. Nordic skiing is not for slouches. Youth that go through these programs hone skills to succeed in their personal goals and be significant contributors to society.

3. What do you have to say about all the volunteers who make events possible?

A resounding thank you! According to Statistics Canada ninety five percent of amateur sport in the nation is delivered by volunteers. Need I say more?

4. Finish this sentence: I volunteer because...

There is an insatiable need for volunteers and I find some satisfaction in contributing. Our elected representatives make the laws and manage the budgets – volunteers define our values and culture.

