

Memorandum to River Falls Youth Hockey Association

February 13, 2008

Dear Association Members:

We have a big week this week for Youth Hockey Fund Raising and the season is in the final stretch. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have worked so hard this year to make our new arena working policies and so forth a great success. We have almost made it through the entire year without an employee, an impressive feat. Thanks to Jon Benusa's leadership in making this all work, along with Candace Mailand, John Lerma, Matt Cranston, Mary Gribble, Lisa Woiwode and Kathy Bullis for a lot of the organization that goes into those major areas of Concessions, Building/Ice Maintenance, Zamboni, Team Management, Building Operations. It is a huge operation when you look at it, and these guys all did a great job of stepping up.

We all appreciate Jody Christensen's consistent efforts to get people involved in working the Tournament hours (& HS Games) and all of her communication efforts (and extra work). Please understand, Jody does not make up the rules, she is just trying to get people to fill the slots and we all appreciate and need her efforts. In addition, a ton of work has gone into setting up these tourneys on the front end (Rick Navarro and Shane Dock) and for teams to come back, it is imperative they have a good experience while they are here. We need to look at everyone that walks into our rink as a valued client and our goal is to service their needs. Shane does not have a kid in this association and probably puts in as much or more time than anyone in our association. Think of that. We're pretty lucky to have him.

This weekend, in addition to the Mite Tourney, we also have a Pancake Breakfast Saturday Morning at Applebee's in Hudson and a Minnesota Wild Game Sunday night for Program Sales. The Mite Tourney will bring in around \$3,000 for the Weekend (not including registration fees of \$4,200), the Breakfast about \$1,500 and the Wild Game between \$1,000 and \$1,500. These are very important to making our Association financially viable. Information on all of these items is on the new website www.riverfallshockey.org/ and it is not at all typical for us to have this many things going on in one weekend, but these are all good things. Next weekend is the Bantam Tourney. Jeanne Eliason is managing the Wild Game and you should all have information on that. Jeanne also worked to get our Web Site redone and it looks great!

Doug Black has been pounding the pavement on all kinds of fundraising ideas, advertising, raffles, circus, new Old Timer Men's Tourney and so forth. Many of us are involved in those issues as well. Several people have been involved in bringing our cans to recycling including the Chris Jensen & family in the past, more recently Joe & Matt Cranston and Scott Shew have done it as well. We get about 1,200 every time we bring in the trailer of cans so it is a big deal. If you see it is full, and have time to help, let us know and you can take it in. It would be nice if everyone shared this duty. Also, the Golf Tournament has been announced on June 11 at 1:00 (Wednesday-See Web Site).

Karl Erickson has had a full schedule with hockey operation's matters and has provided some great leadership for our ACE Committee. DiAnn Fuller has been working what has to be hundreds of hours just managing our income and expenses. We are really in need a "Quick Books" expert if there is one out there for a project we need to complete. Hours will be available for that as well. Contact me if interested. Oh and how about that Outdoor ice? Every Year we have trouble keeping that up, of course this year the weather has been more conducive...but Dave Buck and friends have really stepped up with no urging from anyone to take that project on and maintain all year. Thanks much guys! And let's not forget all of the coaches who are the one on one faces with our kids. Thanks for your commitments to teaching the game we love and making this a fun experience for them.

In an area of concern, I have personally gone through all of the volunteer hour sheets for everyone in our Association and I do see that we have around 1,200 hours of unworked time for families. That has to be a record. Some families have not put in any hours at all and they are not signing up for anything. In our meeting on Monday, I will be discussing the possibility of increasing unworked hours from \$10 to \$20, or higher, for a bill back. It is absolutely imperative that families step up and work their hours for this association to be successful. Since the \$10 does not seem to motivate some people to step to the plate, maybe a higher amount will help. We will at least debate it. We cannot keep relying on the same people to pick up the slack, but we certainly appreciate all of you that understand how important this is and the extra time you spend above and beyond your Association duty. If there is a specific reason people cannot get these hours worked, you need to speak with a Board Member. It is legal to hire other people to do your work for you, but you are responsible for your hours. Some people do hire out their work. Remember folks we get nothing from the City, State or County. We are responsible for everything under this roof, and if everyone does their job, this system is designed to work and it will work. I am going to recommend that we make a spot on the website for people to put their names & contact information as people who are available to work hours for other people and your hourly charge. This will give people another outlet to get hours completed and give Association Members a capitalistic opportunity to make some extra money. I see nothing wrong with paying someone to do your work. If you make \$50 an hour...it makes sense to pay someone \$10 an hour ...or whatever they charge...to manage your volunteer time for you.

In addition, we have several members that are in arrears on funds owed to the Association, to the tune of about 10,000 and this cannot continue. I want to speak personally with every person who has money in arrears with the Association and I would like to determine what steps you are going to take to alleviate this issue as prior steps do not appear to have been successful. It is only fair that each member of the association pays their obligation. We do have a hardship program, and we are not heartless, but we need to have communication and agreements that are followed up on. On Monday, I will recommend that in 2008-2009, no one will step on the ice without being fully paid for all past years and for all volunteer hours, or they must be working on "and" up to date on, an agreement to repay the amount in arrears. If you have input on this issue, you should attend the Board Meeting on Monday. This really was the intended process for years, but it has been difficult to enact. We regret that we will have to take these steps. \$10,000 is a lot of money for us. The building in the winter costs about \$17,000 a month to operate.

This memo is being sent by me and has not been reviewed by the Board. If you have any issues with what is in this memo, your comments should be directed to me or you can bring them to the Board Meeting on Monday Feb 18 at the rink at 6:00.

The bottom line is that it takes a small army to run an association. The more kids and families we get involved, the less we should have to do in volunteer hours. Growth is our initiative. Don't be afraid to invite your neighbor and their kids to the rink. Soccer has 700 kids, we have around 160. If we can get to 300, we would be doing fantastic. Growth is good for all of us and reduces our workload. Hockey, in my opinion, is the funnest and most exciting game to play and the funnest and most exciting game to watch.

When we have our annual Board Meeting in April, I hope we get a good turnout to discuss ideas and make board elections. We could use some fresh faces running for the board.

As always, me and all the Board Members are available for you to talk to and we look forward to hearing your ideas and concerns. As we have always said, with concerns or problems, you should also come with suggestions on how to solve the problem.

Have a great week. Please step and make these tourneys and fundraisers work. Lets all remember the good times when you look on the ice and see these kids playing. This game is a lot of fun. Most things that take a lot of hard work are very rewarding, and hockey is no

exception.

Thanks in advance for your participation. Be sure to get out and see your High School teams in the playoffs and bring the kids. This is what builds their motivation. Seeing those kids play and the crowds can change everything for a kid. I encourage all of you to attend. The girls play Tuesday Feb 19th at 5:00 at our rink, and if all goes well, the Boys will be at 7:00. FYI - www.wisconsinprephockey.net/ is the Wisconsin Boys HS Site and www.wisconsinpirlshockey.net/ is the Girls High School Site. Great Sites!

I am sorry if I missed anyone, I wanted to recognize as many of and identify some things we need to shore up. Let me know of someone you know that goes above and beyond the call of duty to help. Maybe we can get a recognition page on our new web site.

Thanks-Keith

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