

February 2, 2008

LaSalle Spirit Newsletter

First, I would like to say thanks to those who braved the cold and rain to participate in the Santa Claus Parade in early December. A Special thank-you goes to the Morton and Martynse families for their hard work on the float.

We entered the Christmas season with our annual Christmas party at Boppers in LaSalle. There were very few athletes who were not able to attend, and those in attendance appeared to be having a great time! Our thanks goes out to the Boppers management, who provided us with a large amount of tokens for our athletes to play with. I noticed one additional special deed the manager did for one of our athletes. This athlete went up to the counter after using up his tokens, and only had 4 credits, which would not allow that athlete to receive any decent prize. The athlete was given 100 credits, which enabled that athlete to walk away with a nice prize.

In late December, our club received a surprise donation from the Windsor-Essex Health Unit. During 2007, the Unit held dress-down Fridays, where employees would donate a couple dollars to wear casual clothes to work. Each year, this group donates the money to a different charity. In 2007, LaSalle Special Olympics was the recipient of \$600.00. A photo and article will be appearing on our web-site in the near future.

I can't believe it is February already! Time is flying as our basketball schedule is in full swing. Our "D" division competitive athletes competed in Guelph on January 27th. In the first game, Dan Morton and Charlie Johnston led the team with 10 and 5 points respectively, as the LaSalle defeated Hamilton 23-18. Also scoring for LaSalle was Jasmyn Kersey with four points, while Stephanie Meloche and Matt Tolmie scored 2 each.

In the second game against Milton, LaSalle allowed Milton to jump to a 16-4 lead at the half. In the second half, LaSalle played strong defence as they mounted a come-back, but fell short to Milton by a score of 18-16. Stephanie had 6 points, and Charlie had 4 points, while Matt Cormier, Dan Morton, and Chris Pringle each had a basket.

Charlie Johnston scored 6 points and Dan Morton had 4 points, as LaSalle defeated Kitchener 16-8. Also scoring a basket were Chris Pringle and Jenny Pringle.

We placed first in our division after a three-way tie for first was broken by the points for/points against differential. This entitled us to play for the championship against our nemesis, Guelph. They beat us by a score of 23-12. Guelph is one of our main competitors that have also advanced to the Provincial Games in May.

E-mails have been sent out for the St. Thomas Basketball tournament on February 16th, and the Mary Matthews tourney on March 15th in Aurora. I am trying to get as many of the competitive athletes involved in at least one tournament, while giving those selected to compete at the Provincial Games as much tournament exposure as possible. We are also looking at an additional Competitive "D" tournament in Stratford. In addition, there

is a non-competitive/"D" division 3 on 3 or 4 on 4 tournament in April (date to be announced) hosted by Guelph.

The athletes from the LaSalle Spirit that played in the London regional basketball qualifier last year, and have been endorsed to play in the upcoming Provincial games, are as follows: Matt Cormier, Jenny Pringle, John Kukucka, Stephanie Meloche, Jasmyn Kersey, and Dan Morton. Athletes were selected by the head coach based on the following criteria: athlete had to have competed in the regional qualifier, athlete's ability to play at a higher competitive level, ability to stay on his/her own for up to four days at the athletic complex, no behavioural issues, parental/guardian permission if below the age of consent, and finally must be endorsed by the head coach. The athletes not selected to attend the Games was due to at least one of the criteria mentioned.

New T-shirts have been ordered and should be in our hands within the next couple weeks for all active athletes. Warm-up suits have been ordered for those active athletes who have not received them, or for those who ordered replacements (at their own cost).

We will have sample sweatshirts for viewing in order to place one order. The cost of the sweatshirt will be determined shortly, once numbers have been determined. We are looking at having the Special Olympics Ontario logo on the left chest area, and "LaSalle Spirit" across the back. Styles include hooded black sweatshirts, with or without a zippered front, or a hoodless zip-up jacket.

Sloane Crease is coordinating our spring fundraiser on May 9th at the Caboto Club. Everyone will be expected to help out; since this is the way we keep things relatively "free" for our athletes. She will be calling for a committee meeting within the next couple weeks. Her email address is sloane2@sympatico.ca, and her home phone number is **519-978-3294**.

Lastly, we have community council meetings once every couple months, with ample notification to everyone. There are only a handful of people attending these meetings to provide their input and run this organization. Please make an effort attend.

Jim Wright
Community Coordinator