



The Sweep

Royal Kingston Curling Club

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VOLUNTEER

What's missing?

By Martha Tanner, Communications Chair

The start of a new curling season, with all the excitement of new teams, new spils and new opportunities to learn, is the perfect time to consider volunteering at your club. After all, there is a lot more that goes on in a curling club than just curling. Before you even step on the ice, a volunteer has set up a schedule and posted it online. Others have made up teams, drawn up a calendar for the year and planned bonspiels, clinics and social events.

Volunteers are preparing to coach the next generation of curlers - Little Rocks and juniors.

Volunteers maintain our website and social media, make policies for safe curling and the general operation of the club, maintain our facility and all its assets, look after our finances and so much more.

And we have fun doing it. Being involved in your club gives you a feeling of ownership and pride. You develop friendships

and deeper relationships with your fellow curlers built on respect, camaraderie and mutual appreciation. Your commitment can be a one-time event or ongoing participation in a committee or board of directors. There is always room for more and there is always someone willing to help, who has done the job before so you're never without support. And if you have new ideas, so much the better.

This season we will be looking at ways to boost volunteerism and support volunteers at our club. Sylvia Myers, member at large, and Martha Tanner, chair of the Communications Committee, are forming a committee to discuss these issues and come up with strategies. If you would like to help or have ideas, we'd love to hear from you.

In the meantime, please think about how you can help. What interests or skills do you have that you could share? In these pages, you'll find some possibilities and inspiration.



Pennie Robert (left) and Kathleen Poole volunteer at Championship Night 2015 (and many events since!)

Why we volunteer

The success of RKCC depends on the generous commitment of its volunteers. There are so many wonderful volunteers at our club. I asked three with whom I have worked recently to tell me about their experience. One was a brand new curler when he leapt in to a Board position, one has over 50 years' curling experience, but was also new to this club, and one has been a member for two dozen years.

- Martha Tanner



“RKCC is a great club, but cannot operate without volunteers. Everyone has something to bring to the table, so don't be shy. Join a committee, meet new people and get involved. Be a proud member, but an even prouder volunteer. You can help make a difference!”

- John Ryce

John Ryce

John Ryce joined the Board of Directors at the end of his very first season as a curler. Although he was new to the club, he wasn't new to boards, as he had spent nine years on the board of the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce, including a term as president in 2012, and had been involved in several charities and fundraisers throughout his career as a manager at Investors Group. John had worked with another curler on the Almost Home golf fundraiser and she asked John to join the board as chair of the Finance Committee. “I like being involved in organizations and feel that I can help with my past Board experiences,” he explained.

John chaired the Finance Committee for three years before accepting the role of Chair of the Governance Committee/Vice-President of the Board for one year. He served as President of the Board of Directors for two years and past-president for two more. “That is eight years on the Board and I enjoyed every one of them. I knew that to be in line for President it meant several years of commitment, but I was okay with that. Once again, I felt I could contribute in a positive way to the club and help make a difference.”

In 2020 John was asked to be Vice Chair of Special Events for the 2020 Tim Hortons Brier. “This was a huge honour, but also a big responsibility. I believe that my past experience at the Chamber and RKCC helped me in being selected for this position.

“Helping with the Brier is an experience that I will never forget and I look forward to bringing future large-scale curling events to Kingston.”

John retired two years ago, although he and his wife Denise plan to be “Snowbirds” every winter, he still volunteers at the club and is currently chairing the Strategic Business Plan Committee.

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Deb Wilkin

Deb Wilkin, now serving her second term as club President, is another member who became involved very quickly upon joining RKCC. At the beginning of her second year, she was asked to convene the Day Ladies Flight section, with support from the previous convenor. Although Deb was new to Kingston, she was not new to curling, having curled for decades in southwestern Ontario, and had performed this role at other clubs, so she had plenty of experience. And like, John Ryce, she had held positions on a variety of boards and enjoyed the governance aspect. “Also, RKCC already had a robust, comprehensive Resource and Policy manual, so I knew we weren’t starting with a huge void.”

In her eight years at RKCC, Deb has served on a number of committees, including the 200th Anniversary Committee, Curling Committee Task Force and was Director of Ceremonies for the 2020 Brier. She is on the committee overseeing pickleball at the club. As president, she is an ad hoc member of all committees and is particularly interested in exploring new ventures for the club, broadening our base of members and a variety of activities for year-round use. “Getting involved is a win-win for you *and* the club.

There are many talents in our midst that don’t get tapped when the same people keep taking the positions.”

“RKCC is an exceptional club for what it offers its members. You can literally find a variety of leagues and curl six days a week – all for the same full membership fee. There are lots of opportunities to expand to more full-year activities, and the Board is actively pursuing these avenues.

“Volunteers make this club run. Don’t get left out of the decision-making or events you love to be involved with by not volunteering. If you’re not interested, that’s okay too, but please – no complaining about the results!”



Deb Wilkin, centre, chats backstage with pipers at the 2020 Kingston Brier in her role as Director of Ceremonies.

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We  *our volunteers!*

Garry Dupuis

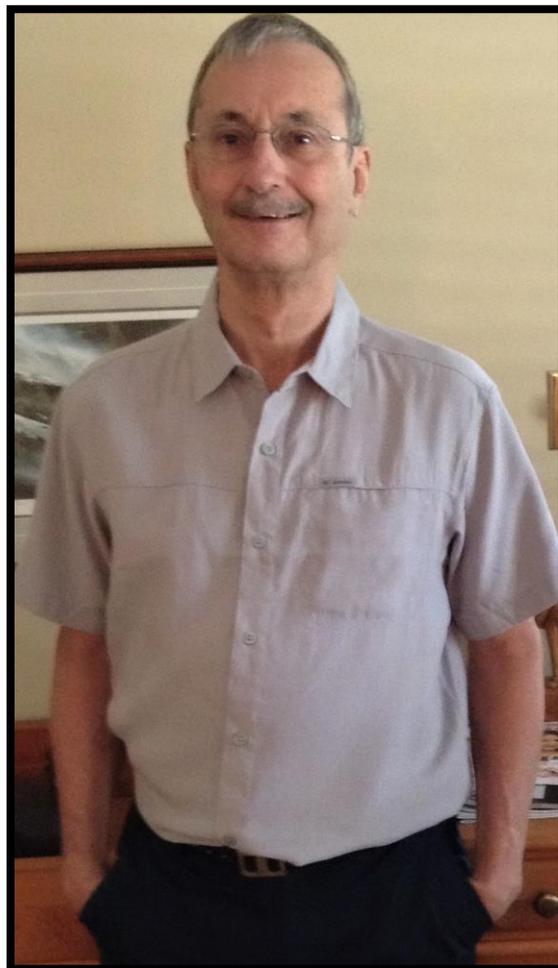
Garry Dupuis can often be found helping out in the kitchen during events like the Whig and the Limestone Bonspiels, and has been involved with the Marketing (Sponsorship) Committee for about 15 years. He and his wife Mary have been members of the club for over 20 years.

“As you know, the curling club quickly becomes like a second home for members, and it is the desire to contribute to the successful operation of the club and to be part of the “curling family” that makes volunteering satisfying,” he says.

He encourages others to become involved and offers some advice to get started. “If a new member wants to get to know others quickly and wants to contribute to the success of the club, then volunteering is the way to go.

“I found that one good way to start is to offer to assist in the kitchen for one of the big events, and you will soon find a welcome group of like-minded individuals. Even if you aren’t “kitchen savvy”, you can always find a way to be useful (i.e., cleanup crew), and this will provide a way to learn about the functioning of the club and make new friends.

“The important thing to keep in mind when volunteering is to find a role or function that you are comfortable with.”



Most recently, Garry Dupuis has volunteered with both online fundraising auctions for the club.

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“The important thing to keep in mind when volunteering is to find a role or function that you are comfortable with.”

*Interested in volunteering?
Email: communications@royalkingston.com*

Some of the many ways to be involved in your club:

- League & bonspiel planning
- Finance (budgets)
- Fundraising
- Building maintenance and operations
- Help with ice maintenance and ice cleaning
- Governance (policies & procedures, strategic business planning)
- Kitchen (meal prep for bonspiels and events, including shopping, cooking, serving, cleaning up)
- Food Safe Handling Course
- Coaching & instruction (youth and adults)
- Volunteer management
- Social event planning
- Membership recruitment and retention
- Gardening & weeding
- Marketing (recruiting sponsors)
- Photography & videography
- Social media
- Ontario Curling Association representative
- Member-at-large (member liaison)
- Curling skills development
- Graphic arts/design (i.e., to help with promotions)
- Newsletter
- Archives/club history
- New member mentor
- High school volunteer hours
- Greater Kingston Curling representative
- Or do you have an idea you'd like to try or see a need that isn't being met?

Why be a volunteer

*It's not for money, it's not for fame,
It's not for any personal gain.
It's for the love of RKCC,
It's just for helping you and me.
It's just to give of little of self;
That's something you can't buy with wealth.
It's not the medals worn with pride,
It's for that feeling deep inside.
It's that reward down in your heart,
It's a feeling that you've been give a part of helping others far and near.
That's what makes you a VOLUNTEER.*

Author unknown

A Word from the President

By Deb Wilkin, President

At its August 25 meeting, the Board approved the following recommendations of the Return to Play Task Force (RTP), which met August 19.

Based on the decision at the last Board meeting, we are adopting the recommendation from Curling Canada/CurlION not to mandate evidence of vaccination status and limit membership to only fully vaccinated. We need to ensure we're in alignment with CurlION's legal requirements as the provincial sport body in Ontario. Otherwise, we stand to lose the CurlION events already scheduled. CurlION is working with the Ministry and its lawyers to review and prepare a legally approved procedure to implement double vaccinations if clubs wish to proceed with that mandate. Formal document may be available by the end of the month.

As background information, the RTP used the guiding principles established last season that worked well for the club's success. We expect to be subject to the Ontario government's Step 3 regulations for the foreseeable future.

⇒ Three Guiding Principles approved by the Board 2020-2021

- Adhere to the Ontario government regulations - currently titled Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Step 3
- Adhere to the Kingston Frontenac Lennox & Addington Public Health orders
- Implement the Curling Canada/CurlION Return-to-Play guidelines where appropriate for our club

Our collective success from 2020-2021:

- No COVID-19 outbreaks/cases at the club
- Safety Plan and Return to Play plan well received
- KFL&A site inspection of RKCC protocols was passed
- KFL&A Public Health Unit protocols and leadership established robust contact tracing processes resulting in relatively low numbers of illness and deaths in our area

Update for this season:

The key recommendations are designed to meet the Curling Canada/CurlION recommendation we should not be implementing a vaccine passport/mandate system at the club due to the potential legal violations we could face. Instead, it was recommended by Curling Canada/CurlION that some restrictions may be considered for this group as long as they are not considered too discriminatory. That being said, should any government body change the regulations, then we will need to comply. Note: KFL&A public health Status of Cases reports that over 80% of residents aged 50 and above are already fully vaccinated (two doses).

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The RTP is recommending the following protocols for the 2021-2022 season:

17. **For fully immunized individuals (both shots + 14 days) masks may be removed to engage in an athletic or fitness activity and to consume food or drink.** We still encourage anyone to wear a mask if that makes them feel more comfortable.
18. **For unvaccinated or partially vaccinated players masks must be worn at all times on the ice and off the ice.** Failure to comply may result in the member's suspension from the club. Note: this means socializing only in the lounge as masks cannot be removed by this group.
19. **Any member who is not eligible to be vaccinated (under 12 years of age in 2021) must also wear a mask at all times, just as they did in the 2020-21 season; coaches & other assistants for Little Rocks included.**
20. The Participant Agreement is still valid with no changes needed; only new/returning members not registered last year need to sign one this year. It is slightly more restrictive than current regulations require. An extra measure of caution is not unreasonable given the nature of the pandemic and the increased risk of exposure by variants.
21. Leagues will be scheduled as they were in 2019, prior to the pandemic. The increased capacity within the club should accommodate this scheduling.
22. Bonspiels and rentals will be permitted, but participants must sign the Participant Agreement and follow the same mask-wearing rules as above
23. All lockers will be available, but we're maintaining the maximums allowed in the locker rooms/washrooms at one time to encourage 2m distancing, whenever possible.
24. Seating in the lounge will be 8 to a table, with a minimum of 2m between the tables
25. Spectators allowed, subject to capacity limits, wearing masks and being able to keep 2m apart from all others in the lounge
26. Getting a drink at the bar will resume, with patrons standing 2m apart and 2m away from others sitting at tables
27. All cleaning protocols will be maintained, according to current public health requirements (products used may change)
28. Contact tracing and COVID-19 health screening must and will continue
29. 2m markers throughout the club/ice shed will remain to remind individuals of the space needed for physical distancing. New ones will be added to the lounge for lining up
30. Return to Play refresher presentation to be scheduled - Keith Mitchell and Peter Coughlin
31. No extension/renewal to the COVID-19 Refund Policy for 2021-2022
32. Return to Play and Safety Plan document updates to follow shortly

Note: The regulation's 50% capacity allowance is based on the occupancy number allowed in different areas of the club by the Fire Code. The club must ensure that people always have the ability to maintain a distance of 2m from others. Individuals are responsible to then keep that distance.

Until such time as the public health measures are further relaxed we recommend **continuing to play the revised version of the game from last season, with only one sweeper, and no sweeping by the skips in order to maintain a 2m distance from other players, whenever possible. We don't want to see a crowded house.**

Think about joining the Board of Directors

The following article is reprinted, in part, with the permission of Curling Canada. It was posted by Kim Perkins on the Curl Canada website on April 10, 2013. It has been edited for length.

Most curling clubs are guided by a Board of Directors. If you're new to curling or you've been a member for only a few years, you might feel you don't have anything to offer the Board. This couldn't be further from the truth. Curling clubs are always trying to recruit new members, and who could be better than a new member to offer the Board fresh eyes, new energy, and interesting ideas. Please don't let your neophyte status stop you from volunteering to help guide the club.

Networking and community-building – Being elected to your club's Board of Directors will allow you to get to know many other members you might not otherwise have a chance to know. Sitting on the Board of Directors is a great way to get to know the community that is your curling club.

You and the committee, as a collective, can effect change – Change may not come swiftly, as committees generally meet only once a month, but by working as a group you can make huge improvements or just tweak things a little if they're already working well.

Find a position on the Board that interests YOU – Everyone has a specialty, from marketing, to accounting, to engineering, to construction and so on. Try to run for a position that sounds stimulating and exciting to you.

Don't let having a complaint be your only reason for running – This is not a good reason to get onto the Board of Directors. This is probably a good reason for you to consider writing a letter to the Board raising your concern. It is important to join because you want to help make the club better overall.

Keep your term short and sweet – If you are asked to sit for a three-year term, do just that and take a break after the three years. We all admire those volunteers who keep coming back to help, but it's important to rotate volunteers on the Board to prevent burn-out and encourage new blood to join.

Don't join just to gain another chink in your belt – If you want to sit on the Board of Directors of a Curling Club for the accolades you may be in for a surprise. Board members are respected for what they DO while on the Board not just for filling a chair.

Don't run if you don't want to – Sometimes people feel obligated to take on a volunteer role just because there isn't anyone else (these are usually people who volunteer constantly and are a wonderful asset to any club). Taking on a role that doesn't interest you is just going to bore you and potentially cause volunteer burnout. The last thing we want is to lose a great volunteer because he or she was pushed into doing too much. It's OK to say no, just remember that.



Consider joining one of RKCC's many committees, such as Marketing, Membership, Communications, Finance, Operations, Social and more – Joining a committee will provide valuable experience and knowledge before making the leap to committee chair and member of the Board of Directors. If you are interested in serving on a committee or on the Board, please speak to any Board member. And please consider volunteering in whatever capacity you can.