

Winter Games still short volunteers

By James Waterman

The date of the Ontario Winter Games is quickly approaching and only a quarter of the necessary volunteers have been secured for the competition, which takes place from March 4-7, 2010.

To date, the committee has recruited approximately 250 of the 1,000 volunteers needed. They are searching for individuals to fill roles in areas such as administration, security and food services. A complete list of positions and other volunteer information is available at www.2010ontariowintergames.ca.

Despite the number of volunteers still needed, Myke Malone, the general manager of the Winter Games, is optimistic. The region's sports organizations have expressed interest in assisting with the games.

"There's a chunk of our volunteer base that is what we refer to as sports specific," Malone explains. "And a big chunk of that comes from local sporting clubs. For instance, in Gravenhurst, the hockey association is helping us with the hockey events. In Huntsville, the Huntsville Figure Skating Club is a good source of volunteers for us to help us run the figure skating events. So, we are going to the local sporting clubs, trying to recruit volunteer support for the sporting aspect of the competition. The other field of volunteers that we need are non-sports specific."

Malone says the committee is actually ahead of schedule in terms of planning and preparing for the event. Recruiting volunteers is among the biggest concerns at this point. Individuals can register to volunteer online; their names will go into

the database and they will be contacted when positions have been determined.

Malone notes many individuals who registered online in recent weeks may not have been contacted as of yet, but they will be hearing from the committee to confirm their participation as soon as roles have been assigned.

He hopes individuals who are considering volunteering will take advantage of this opportunity to be part of one of the largest sporting events in the province and experience sporting events they might not be accustomed to seeing in Muskoka.

"It's an incredible calibre of sport that we will be hosting here," he says. "Gold medalists at these will be moving on to the 2012 Canada Games with a goal of qualifying there for the 2014 Olympics," he notes.