

Report of the President
2009 Board of Directors and Governing Council Meeting
Ron Hershberger

As I write this report, our country is struggling with a sagging economy and there is considerable pessimism on the part of many people about any improvement in the economy in the near term. At the same time many others believe our problems are only temporary and that we have the will and the resources to achieve great things in the future. These views are probably not too different from how you and our board members view U.S. Figure Skating. While I recognize that there are some problems we face, I remain optimistic about our future. At the same time, I also recognize that we should take reasonable defensive steps to protect our future. With that framework in mind, I'd like to look back at the past year, and share with you what I see in the near-term future.

Our competitors: As you know, our charge is to sustain, promote and develop figure skating in the United States. Certainly, the most visible component of our involvement in skating is our competitive structure and, particularly, our championship events. As I think back on the U.S. Figure Skating Championships, I don't see how anyone could fail to be impressed by the strength and depth of our skaters in all four disciplines. From novice to the championship level, the skating at our national championships was terrific. Both on the senior level and the junior level, our skaters also fared well this past year on the international scene. This is true not only in singles, pairs and dance, but also in synchronized skating. The depth of these programs bodes well for our future.

Our competitions: Every year we spend a substantial part of our time managing and staging competitions. Year after year, our local organizing committees (LOCs) and a host of volunteers do an outstanding job of managing these competitions – and this past year was no exception. We also spend a great deal of time training and educating our officials. And all that work is rewarded with the enormously talented and dedicated officials who serve at our competitions – and those officials, from my perspective, are the best officials in the world. In terms of ISU competitions, Skate America was a great success in Everett, Wash., setting a new attendance record. Finally, we will host the ISU World Figure Skating Championships in Los Angeles, Calif., in March. Hosting Worlds not only gives our competitors the opportunity to compete before a largely “home town” audience, but it also provides revenue for U.S. Figure Skating when it is most needed.

Our membership: Despite the bad economic times, participation in our Basic Skills program has remained strong. Although our regular membership is down somewhat, our numbers are better than I expected them to be given the country's current economic woes. Perhaps we can take some comfort in knowing that our regular membership has decreased only slightly. The board looks at these numbers carefully and we discuss what we can do to encourage new and continued membership in U.S. Figure Skating. We also decided to try to get more information about why some skaters do not renew their membership. To that end, we sent out a questionnaire to determine why skaters stop skating. We will analyze the replies to that questionnaire to determine if there are steps we can take to encourage continued participation in skating.

Our financial matters: The board has taken our financial situation very seriously and worked hard to trim expenses where we could. It is, of course, a positive development that, after a year with no significant sponsors, we negotiated a contract with AT&T to be our title sponsor for the U.S. Figure Skating Championships, with Smucker's signing on as the title sponsor for the Skating Spectacular at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships. We also have good reason to believe that additional sponsors will sign on with us. In addition, we know that ticket sales for the World Championships in Los Angeles and 2010 U.S. Championships in Spokane have been robust. These factors, in my opinion, are signals that figure skating is still attractive both to sponsors and audiences. So, how should we react over the next couple of years if our expenses exceed our revenues by several hundred thousand dollars? Fortunately, U.S. Figure Skating had the wisdom to create the U.S. Figure Skating Foundation years ago and put surplus revenues into the Foundation. More recently, we created a cash reserve (technically, not in the Foundation) of several million dollars (the “cash reserve fund”). Both the Foundation and the cash reserve fund exist solely for the purpose of providing financial support to U.S. Figure Skating when it is needed. If we assume even a modest return on the cash reserve fund and the Foundation assets, it would be several years before we would exhaust the cash reserve fund. Having that cushion for the next few years will give us additional time to see if the economy recovers and additional revenue sources can be developed. Clearly, the board will need to continue to monitor our expenses and income with great care.

Our Museum: I also need to report to you about the status of the World Figure Skating Museum and Halls of Fame. Last year, as we left Governing Council, we were waiting for a decision from an arbitrator to determine who owned the museum collection and endowments, including the Halls of Fame. Shortly after the conclusion of Governing Council, we received the arbitrator's decision, which found in favor of U.S. Figure Skating on every point. As a result, the ownership of the museum collection and endowments, including the Halls of Fame, has been returned to U.S. Figure Skating. As a consequence, the Museum corporation that we formed, which was to be a "supporting organization" of U.S. Figure Skating, really has no assets and no functions to perform. Although the Board of Trustees of the Museum corporation tried to raise funds for the museum, they simply weren't able to raise nearly enough money to be self-sustaining. There is no reason to believe that they – or anyone else – will be able to do so in the next few years. So, the question is "where do we go from here?" The board has had a preliminary discussion of this matter, but no conclusion has been reached.

ISU issues: There are three major topics that I want to report to you regarding our international federation: (1) The ISU has informed us that it will no longer provide any operational financial support for Skate America. Based on what the ISU has said directly to me, the ISU has taken this position because the ISU has not been able to sell its television rights to the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series in the United States – so we are, in effect, punished because of the ISU's inability to sell those rights. We have argued that the ISU should look at the Grand Prix series as a whole and provide equitable financial support to the federations participating in the series. To date, that argument has been rejected by the ISU, but we plan to continue our discussion of this subject with the ISU in an effort to get financial support for Skate America. (2) Relying on an obscure provision in the ISU Constitution for its authority to do so, the ISU issued Communication 1534 in October 2008, informing members that the number of judges for championship events would be reduced to a maximum of nine judges. We objected strenuously, both on procedural grounds and because of the adverse effect of reducing the number of judges' marks used to determine the result. We asked Skate Canada to join with us in making a protest, which Skate Canada readily agreed to do, and a joint letter was sent to the ISU expressing our concerns. The ISU refused to change its position. Unfortunately, member federations will not be able to do anything about this until the next Congress in June 2010. (3) Given the number of years that we have been using the IJS, we should have sufficient experience to take a look at the IJS to see if and where modifications can be made that would be beneficial to all concerned. Accordingly, I have appointed a study group, headed by Gale Tanger, to look at the IJS and report back as soon as possible. That study group will also look at other ISU issues as we prepare for the ISU Congress in 2010.

Our governance: You undoubtedly recognize that we turn over our volunteer leadership at U.S. Figure Skating at least every four to six years – and it is that volunteer leadership that makes the major policy decisions for this organization. I doubt that any management consultant would recommend that as business model for a corporation operating on an \$11 million plus annual budget. Yet, we manage to operate – very effectively, in my opinion – with volunteers who are enormously dedicated to U.S. Figure Skating and a very competent Headquarters staff. The board's monthly telephone conferences are working reasonably well, although it is sometime difficult to manage a call with 16 participants (which includes the non-voting athlete). Since this system is functioning well, I would oppose any proposal to increase the size of the board.

Final thoughts: As I finish my term, please permit me to make a few personal observations. Much more often than not, I have found the office of president to be enormously rewarding. Occasionally, the president's job is difficult, even frustrating, but because of all those who support the president, even the difficult work doesn't seem so daunting. In particular, I want to thank all those board members who have served with me – without exception they have been collegial, supportive and consistently have demonstrated their unselfish commitment to U.S. Figure Skating and its programs. I also firmly believe that it is critically important to the success of U.S. Figure Skating for the president and the executive director to have a positive working relationship – a relationship that is built on mutual respect, a willingness to communicate openly and candidly, and a sharing of skill sets. That's the relationship I have had as president with our executive director, David Raith, and it has been a joy to work with him. David came to us as executive director at a critical time in our history and together we plunged into the tasks facing us. David has my wholehearted and heartfelt thanks not only for what he has achieved but also for the countless hours he spends working and thinking about how to make U.S. Figure Skating even better than it is now. Most of all, I want you to know how honored I feel to have been elected by you to serve as president of U.S. Figure Skating. The past four years have been some of the best years of my life. I have cherished memories of many events, but most of all I cherish the relationships that were built with so many of our volunteers, athletes, parents, coaches, and staff – a host of people whom I will count as my friends for life.

**Report of the Executive Director
2009 Board of Directors and Governing Council Meeting
David Raith**

Once again, it is my pleasure to submit now my FOURTH Executive Director's Report for the Governing Council. Beginning in Orlando in 2006 and now in Buffalo in 2009, it continues to be a pleasure and honor working with volunteers and staff of U.S. Figure Skating. The Headquarters staff is here to serve you by implementing the policies and procedures established by the Governing Council and Board of Directors.

This past year has been an eventful year – as usual. Beginning last summer with the ISU Congress, and then just as the qualifying season was to begin, the economy began its downward spiral, and we all started a belt-tightening strategy that continues today. However, this strategy has one goal or mission – to make every effort to continue to support our athletes, clubs and members as we have done in the recent past. And for the most part, I believe we are doing just that. Every day I – and staff – think and work towards creating a better environment for all U.S. Figure Skating members and supporters, or toward developing new revenue sources. This past year, we have been able to secure the start of what we believe is just the beginning of significant sponsorship dollars to the organization through new relationships (AT&T) and continuing or returning sponsors (Smucker's and State Farm). In addition, we believe the establishment of a new development department at Headquarters is also the start of developing significant new sources of revenue and funding that have not been accessed in the past. I am bullish on our opportunities as we head into an Olympic year.

As I have done in the recent past, I have asked our senior directors at Headquarters to provide a summary and overview of their areas of responsibility for the past year for this report. As I reviewed them this year, I am humbled and proud of all the work the staff is involved with, and accomplishes throughout the year. I didn't put a word limit of their reports(!), but I found them all to be a fast read – and most informative. I hope you do too. They are provided below.

But one final comment before the staff reports – and that is to also take the opportunity to thank the only president with whom I have worked so far – Mr. Ron Hershberger (or as his drivers license says – and the name he travels with – Mr. J. Ronald Hershberger!) He has been an invaluable mentor to me; patient; a lively debater of topics and issues that we handle on almost a daily basis. We certainly don't agree on everything, but when we do differ, we come to a mutual consensus and move on. He can sense when I may not be having the best day – and I can do the same with him. Whether it's on the phone, or traveling together, I am proud of the team we have made. I will continue to seek his counsel after his current duties as president end. I look forward to working with a new president, and I will never forget what I have learned and experienced over the past four years. Thank you, Ron.

And now, the staff reports:

Membership

By Susi Wehrli-McLaughlin, Senior Director

Demographic Notes of 2007-08

We are currently comprised of 717 member clubs (604 full, 28 collegiate and 85 high school), 912 registered Basic Skills Programs nationwide, 563 synchronized skating teams and 30 theatre on ice teams. U.S. Figure Skating registered a grand total of 178,500 members during the 2007-08 season with 114,912 individual Basic Skills members and 63,588 full club/full individual members. Fourteen thousand twenty five (14,025) NEW members were brought into the association. The 2008-09 membership year will conclude on June 30, 2009 for all members, as the Basic Skills membership year is aligning with the full membership year for the first time.

The overall trend that we are seeing during these times reflects families deciding to stay a little closer to home with less travel and more focus on getting value for their dollar. Basic Skills Program directors and competition chairs have been reporting both higher and lower participation rates depending on where they are in the country. The message to us is to offer the best possible skating experience so families see the investment in skating is well worth their time and effort.

Our biggest task this year has been the implementation of the coach registration process. The overall consensus has been that the requirement is long overdue and adds credibility to our sport and our coaches by ensuring that we are providing a safe environment and protecting the welfare of all participants in sanctioned activities. Parents must also have the highest degree of confidence that their children are not only receiving good care and proper instruction, but are also safe from improper conduct. As of today, there are nearly 5,000 coaches registered with their background screen and liability insurance in place. All efforts were made to make this a smooth process for all and for the first year we believe that goal was accomplished. We want to thank our member clubs and the coaches for their commitment to the process!

NEW Collegiate Membership Package

The Membership Committee has created a new four-year membership package called the “collegiate member” that goes into effect this coming membership year. This membership option is available through any U.S. Figure Skating member club and the fee to register will be \$70.00 for four years. This is greatly discounted, as the membership dues are currently \$40.00 per person per year (a savings of \$90 or 66%).

A likely popular option will be for figure skating clubs or parents to gift this membership to graduating high school seniors so they will stay connected to both their home club and U.S. Figure Skating. Athletes will also be able to purchase this membership option through any U.S. Figure Skating member club. Please look for more detailed information about the collegiate membership package in the near future.

Basic Skills

Our Basic Skills Program is the greatest tool U.S. Figure Skating has to build membership. With the assistance of our partner rink association, Serving the American Rinks (STAR), we are constantly promoting the benefits of utilizing all U.S. Figure Skating programs within every rink in the country. By offering the most complete and affordable beginning ice skating curriculum, U.S. Figure Skating will be able to reach new skaters and families bringing them directly into the pipeline.

During the 2008 season, the Basic Skills Program awarded nine ‘over 1000’ member programs and 63 ‘over 400’ programs. We would like to recognize our five largest Basic Skills Programs: Ice House Skating School, Hackensack, N.J.; The Rinx, Hauppauge, N.Y.; Skate Great Inc., Buffalo, N.Y., the Alltel Ice Den, Scottsdale, Ariz.; and special congratulations to Wollman Rink in New York, N.Y., as our largest skating school in the country for the fifth time.

Every registered Basic Skills member now receives a Basic Skills Edition of SKATING included in their membership benefits. This once-a-year publication will be mailed directly to each of 100,000-plus Basic Skills members as part of their membership. Michelle Kwan is featured on the cover of our first issue and her welcome message to the skaters is “look ahead and enjoy the ride,” as she describes the life lessons she has learned through her skating career. “Those lessons will stay with you long after you step off the ice, and you will become a better person because of it.” The purpose of this special edition of SKATING is to introduce our Basic Skills members to this lifetime sport while giving them fun, entertaining and useful information about skating.

Competitions: The Basic Skills competition format continues to be easy to run and profitable for all. More and more nonqualifying competitions have added Basic Skills levels into their events bringing in more participants and adding to the bottom line. Please refer to the specific rules of Basic Skills to help us maintain consistency and the high quality of these events. In addition, more states are offering the Basic Skills Competition Series. Currently, we have established series in Florida, Colorado, Michigan, Wisconsin and Ohio with many states preparing to start their series next year such as Illinois and Minnesota! The programs are able to work together to effectively promote the Basic Skills Program giving additional rewards to all participants. Truly a cooperative effort!

Workshops: Basic Skills Programs in Rochester, Minn., Chicago, Ill., Elkins Park, Pa., Eagle, Colo., Atlanta, Ga., Bethlehem, Pa., Ft. Collins, Colo., and Overland Park, Kan., hosted a combination of instructor workshops and director meetings. We are striving to make our educational opportunities more efficient for our instructors and we are making an effort to reach out to our Basic Skills Program directors so that we are educating everyone that is working with the skaters within the Basic Skills Program.

For the second year in a row, U.S. Figure Skating was fortunate to have a one hour slot at a majority of the 2008 Professional Skaters Association (PSA) Nationwide Seminars, where we discussed ideas for “Growing Your Skating Program” with the coaches in attendance. We discussed many program ideas and initiatives for both the growth and retention of our skaters, helping to keep the industry strong.

Mentoring Program: We launched a mentoring program that is charged with assisting/mentoring all of the new programs that have registered since August 2008. We currently have 15 mentors working with 45 new programs! The idea behind this program is to make sure all lines of communication are open and that all program directors know whom to turn to when they need assistance.

National Skating Month

The 2009 National Skating Month celebration was a tremendous success with over 300 clubs, programs and rinks all hosting open houses across the country throughout the month of January. In its eighth year, with the cooperative efforts of USA Hockey, U.S. Speedskating and STAR, the National Skating Month promotional kits were sold out for the first time ever. During the month-long celebration, activities at participating rinks included free skating, free lessons and clinics, exhibitions, skating demonstrations, hockey games, speedskating races, parent education, equipment re-sales, fundraising activities, and parties at the rink. Many programs attracted new families who may never have tried ice skating, but having an open house and offering free lessons in a fun and friendly environment enticed them to tie up some skates and give it a try. If you want to join in the fun next year, please remember to sign up early! Registration forms will be available this year beginning in August. For complete coverage of the events held across the country, go to <http://www.usfigureskating.org/Clubs.asp?id=234>.

Community SkateFests at our National Events

In conjunction with both Skate America in Everett, Wash., and the 2009 AT&T U.S. Championships in Cleveland, Ohio, U.S. Figure Skating organized community SkateFests inviting families in the local areas to come skate, meet some of our top athletes, and receive free lessons from local instructors and information about the local programs. A tremendous effort was made in the Cleveland area with over one thousand people taking part in the 14 area SkateFests. Special appearances were made by our athletes including 35 U.S. novice and junior competitors who were sent to the various sites for a meet and greet and autograph signing to help celebrate National Skating Month. Each site was in charge of their own activities and most included open skating, free lessons, mini-exhibitions and skill demonstrations by the guest and local club skaters. Each participant was also given information about local programs and souvenirs to take home. Each site also raffled off tickets for the Smucker’s Skating Spectacular to the participants. All activities including lessons were free of charge to the public. Participating programs in Cleveland were: Brooklyn Blades on Ice, The Pond Learn to Skate-Chagrin Valley, City of Euclid, City of Mentor, Cleveland Skating Club, Forestwood FSC, Gilmour Academy, Ice Land USA Skating Academy, Kent State University, North Olmstead Recreation Center, Shaker Learn to Skate, IceLand USA Skating Academy-Winterhurst, I Skate-Wooster Skating Academy, and Garfield Heights.

Bridge Program

Bridge Programs are the necessary link between Basic Skills and club membership. Every successful club has a strong feeder system and welcomes new skaters to join when they are ready. Offering affordable package programs is the best way to entice new skaters to participate. A one year introductory club membership should be offered with this program to help families make the transition to club membership. Look at your own pathway from group lessons into your club and see if a new parent walking around the facility will be able to easily find you. Being an individual sport, this pathway must be defined and communicated. If you need more information on different ways to design a Bridge Program in your area, please consult the new web page in the clubs section of U.S. Figure Skating Online to get started or call Headquarters for assistance.

Test Track:

The test track is a new competitive event in the nonqualifying system that lines up the test structure requirements with the competition levels allowing our recreationally-minded skaters a fair playing field to continue competing and testing according to their current abilities. We have added a web page for more information about level descriptions so before adding this event into your competition, please refer to the web site for the most up-to-date information. Clubs have reported an increase of entries from 15-35% just by adding the test track events.

Club Education Seminars

Every year we host four seminars, one in each section and one at the Governing Council meeting bringing together our local club board members for a day of education, networking and discussions on relevant information about running a successful club in today's time. Participants leave with a better understanding of who they are, where they fit, different resources available to them, and new ideas for the members they serve. This year our selected sites were Salt Lake City, Utah, Shattuck-St. Mary's in Faribault., Minn., and Philadelphia SC and HS. Thank you to our hosts and all of the people who attended.

Membership Retention Survey

We recently sent out a survey asking former members why they left skating to see if we could identify some problem areas and find solutions to increase our retention rates. Some key take away messages are for us to look for ways to reduce costs of participation at every level making our sport more affordable, offer as many "try-skating" opportunities to reach out to potential members throughout the year, continue promoting the positive aspects of our sport (the life lessons, values and commitment of our members), and celebrate, reward and recognize the milestones along the way.

As senior director of membership, I would like to thank our membership staff for their hard work throughout the year: Kathy Dreves, director of member services, Jill Haubert, Basic Skills Program manager, Lola Johnson and Julie Dudman, member services specialists, Cindy Pacheco, Basic Skills specialist, and Debbie Lyons, fulfillment.

Athlete High Performance

By Mitch Moyer, Senior Director

U.S. Figure Skating receives annual funding from the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) to provide for elite athlete funding and financial support for athlete, coaching and sports sciences and medicine programs, and U.S. Figure Skating high performance personnel. The athlete, coaching and sports sciences and medicine programs are core U.S. Figure Skating programs or new programs that are created to address the action plan outlined in the 2007-10 U.S. Figure Skating High Performance Plan. U.S. Figure Skating received approximately 1.1 million dollars in financial support each year for the past two seasons to fund staff, specific programs and projects to enhance the medal-winning potential for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games.

In addition to USOC's supported programs, creating a strong pipeline of developmental programs is critical to the continued success of U.S. Figure Skating's athletes.

Athlete Programs

In 2009, U.S. Figure Skating added Mary-Elizabeth Wightman, coordinator of athlete and coaching programs, to coordinate athlete and coaching programs at Headquarters.

The pipeline of athlete high performance programs include Reach for the Stars, Team 2014, Pairs Camp, Competition/Seminars, Champs Camp, Developmental Internationals, the Team USA International Competitions, the Performance Enhancement & Tracking Program and the Mentoring Program.

The Reach for the Stars program was held at the U.S. Junior Figure Skating Championships in Lake Placid, N.Y. This program was open to any competitor who skated at a regional championship and was attended by approximately 400 people. Topics included understanding step sequences in the International Judging System (IJS), handling the stress of being a skating parent, inside U.S. Figure Skating, nutrition, style and presentation, ballet, growth and development and ethics. Feedback from this program has been and continues to be positive.

The Team 2014 program for all U.S. novice athletes was held in Cleveland, Ohio, following the conclusion of the novice events at the AT&T U.S. Figure Skating Championships. The program was kicked off with a keynote speech by 1988 Olympic Champion, Brian Boitano. Approximately 150 athletes, coaches and parents attended presentations that include topics on IJS, international competitions, doping control, the media, handling the stress of being a skating parent, planning and monitoring and fundraising. The athletes were also able to attend an event in their discipline and practice judge with national and international judges and technical specialists.

This year's pairs camp is focusing on senior-level athletes preparing for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games as well as junior age-eligible athletes for international competitions. The pairs camp in 2010 will focus on the new generation of pair skaters coming up in the new Olympic quadrennial and will include a pairs tryout.

Seminars held during five summer competitions include Liberty Summer Competition, Skate Detroit, Silicon Valley Open, Lake Placid Ice Dance Championships and Indy Challenge Pairs. These presentations are designed to educate parents, athletes and coaches on various topics. International Committee chair Lorrie Parker and U.S. Teams Coordinator Julie Schmitz also held optional team envelope meetings at Liberty. These meetings allowed Lorrie and Julie to meet with several of the Team C athletes, coaches and parents to relay important information to them about the upcoming season. A similar presentation was made at the 2009 Team 2014 seminar which provided important information to our future international athletes, coaches and parents. Also included at these competitions were in-depth evaluations for international competitors or athletes being considered for an international assignment.

In June 2008, U.S. Figure Skating hosted the second annual Champs Camp for athletes in the A and B envelopes. Several new and exciting aspects were incorporated into the camp, including the "Amazing Awaits" theme, an international conference call with Executive Director David Raith announcing the ISU selections for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series senior competitions, a special session with technical specialists from each discipline and an entertaining team building activity that took place in the outdoor pool at the Olympic Training Center (OTC). The purpose of the 2009 Champs Camp held in June will be to focus primarily on performance leading up to and including the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. The 2010 Olympic Team delegation of team leader, team managers, team doctor, physical therapist, media personnel, and technical officials as well as judges will work together to elevate the performance expectations for U.S. Figure Skating's athletes at the 2010 Games.

The Performance Enhancement and Tracking Program (PET) was launched in the 2006-07 season. This program and its director, former Olympic and World coach Kathy Casey, are made possible by the financial support of the USOC.

The purpose of PET is to evaluate athlete preparation, work with each athlete's support system to expand performance enhancement tools and track each athlete's development. The program promotes careful planning, provides funding, demands accountability, and tracks progress. In addition, the program requires the athlete and coach to identify specific goals that will optimize each athlete's chances of medaling at international competitions, including the 2009 ISU World Figure Skating Championships and the 2010 Olympic Winter Games.

A great deal of time has been spent tracking the results of U.S. Figure Skating's athletes over the past and present season. Not only comparing our athletes against the world's best at their level, but also tracking our individual skaters/teams point totals and results throughout the competitive season.

The Mentoring Program is designed to have the past World and Olympic athletes share their knowledge and experiences with coaches, athletes and parents.

Invitations have been sent out to the athletes to apply to be part of the Developmental International team for three competitions in Canada – Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. These three Canadian competitions will be held in August.

The 2008-09 season proved to be another successful year for Team USA. The United States had a total of 181 entries this season at eight Junior Grand Prix events, six Grand Prix events, four Senior B events, the combined Junior Grand Prix/Grand Prix Final, the ISU Four Continents Championships and the ISU World Junior Figure Skating Championships. At these events Team USA compiled 25 gold medals, 26 silver medals and 19 bronze medals for a total of 70 medals. At the time of the submission of this report, the 2009 World Championships and the International Challenge Cup had not been held. Fifteen athletes are slated to compete at the World Championships and four at the International Challenge Cup.

The chart below illustrates the breakdown of medals per level and discipline for the 2008-09 season.

2008-09 Medals

JGP's & JGP Final				
	Ladies	Men	Pairs	Dance
Gold	6	4	0	7
Silver	4	4	0	3
Bronze	3	2	0	0

Grand Prix's & GP Final				
	Ladies	Men	Pairs	Dance
Gold	0	2	0	1
Silver	1	4	2	2
Bronze	2	3	1	3

Four Continents				
	Ladies	Men	Pairs	Dance
Gold	0	0	0	1
Silver	0	1	0	0
Bronze	0	0	0	1

World Juniors				
	Ladies	Men	Pairs	Dance
Gold	0	1	0	1
Silver	1	0	0	1
Bronze	1	0	1	0

Senior B's				
	Ladies	Men	Pairs	Dance
Gold	1	0	0	1
Silver	0	1	1	1
Bronze	0	0	0	2

U.S. Teams

The priority for the U.S. Teams Coordinator, Julie Schmitz, has been to organize each team that was assigned internationally. This includes not only serving as the liaison between each local organizing committee and our teams, but also communicating with each team member and preparing each team leader for the event. Several new items were designed and created for Team USA this year, including new trading and team pins, new handbooks for both team members and team leaders, and new team leader supply bags. Prior to the start of the season, the Selections Committee chair hosted a large conference call for all of the team leaders. The call served as a tool for communicating relevant information to the team leaders and also prepared them for situations they may encounter while traveling with the team.

During the fall, the athlete high performance department hired an intern to help coordinate the U.S. Teams. The intern proved to be helpful in assisting with the logistics of our teams and prepared a written document detailing step-by-step guidelines for all Team USA activities. Creating this document will ensure consistency in the handling of Team USA related duties.

One exciting project that has been evolving over the past several months is the development of criteria for a new team leader selection process. A working group consisting of Headquarters staff, committee chairs and board members was gathered to help review and revise the selection procedures. Several aspects of the procedures have been revised including the selection timeline, the feedback and reporting process and strategic assignments. The process is almost complete and at the time of this report was in the final stages of approval.

With the Olympics less than a year away, the U.S. Teams support staff is planning and gathering preliminary information from potential Olympic team members. An online Olympic Games survey was sent to potential team members, coaches and parents in an effort to collect rough estimates of their housing and ticket needs. In addition, Mitch Moyer, Richard Dalley, Lorrie Parker and Julie Schmitz held a site visit in Vancouver after the conclusion of the 2009 Four Continents Championships. The site visit included tours of the Olympic Village, several sport venues and potential housing locations.

Coaching Programs

The most effective way to develop athletes is through coaches' education. In partnership with the Professional Skaters Association (PSA) and the USOC, U. S. Figure Skating helps to provide and financially support specific coaching programs, which include Reach for the Stars, Pairs, Dance and the Synchronized Skating Coaches' Colleges, Team 2014, Competition/Seminars, Elite Track at the PSA Conference and courses to support the continuing education requirements (CER). Additionally, the PSA provides a publication, rating and ranking system, and a yearly conference along with seminars and workshops to enhance the education of all skating coaches at all levels in the United States.

The Elite Coaches Seminar and the Pairs and Dance Coaches Colleges take place in conjunction with the PSA International Conference & Trade Show in Orlando, Fla. at the end of May. The focus will be on preparing elite coaches for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games with topics such as the coach's role with the media, monitoring athletes, PET processing and funding. The Pairs and Dance Coaches Colleges is for coaches of athletes in the juvenile and intermediate levels in pairs and dance at the U.S. Junior Championships. Any coach is welcome to attend, but those coaches with athletes in the top three at the U.S. Junior Championships receive funding for attending the seminar. Additionally, there is education for synchronized skating coaches in the Synchronized Skating Training Festival and National Coaches College.

The CER for coaches, a joint effort between PSA and U.S. Figure Skating, is off to a great start. Approximately 100 coaches have already completed the requirements for the initial deadline of July 1, 2010, for the 2010-11 season. Four courses are available online with more to be rolled out in March and June.

Synchronized Skating

The 2009 season started with the third U.S. Synchronized Skating Training Festival and National Coaches College in late June at the University of Delaware, in Newark, Del. This was a four-day coaches program and athlete training camp, with more than 350 coaches and athletes attending, in addition to 125 parents who came for the parents' education classes. The coaches of all 12 teams in the 2009 international envelope program served as faculty for the event, making it one of the most exciting and prestigious training programs held by U.S. Figure Skating.

In August, the leadership of all synchronized skating committees and subcommittees met for a day-long strategic planning meeting, led by Kelly Hodge, director of synchronized skating and collegiate programs, and committee chair Karin Sherr. All programs and plans from the past several years were evaluated with the group developing a plan for building upon the past success and taking the sport forward. All proposals for rule changes and new programs came out of this meeting.

The fall began with the Synchronized Skating Sectional Monitoring program, where IJS level teams competing at sectionals had the opportunity to attend an official monitoring program held in conjunction with a nonqualifying competition. A qualified technical panel was brought in to discuss, monitor and give feedback to teams. Approximately 50 teams nationwide participated in the three events.

A pilot program for 6.0 level teams was initiated, the Eastern Synchronized Skating Challenge Series, a competition series where teams collect points throughout the season to earn an overall "title." The purpose is to keep excitement and interest of teams lower than juvenile – 535 skaters on 47 teams participated.

The most exciting new program for the year was the DREAM program, to which all athletes on the U.S. Synchronized Skating Team were invited to apply. The goal was to identify 10 outstanding athletes to assist in being spokeswomen and role models for synchronized skating. The athletes were selected in December, through an extensive application process, and began their role by assisting with media coverage of their international competitions. All DREAM skaters will be volunteering their time at the 2009 Synchronized Skating Training Festival.

The 2009 Synchronized Skating Sectional Championships were a success thanks to the Rocky Mountain FSC (Midwestern and Pacific Coast) and the Skating Club of Morris, N.J. (Eastern). We were pleased to see our overall numbers of participating teams increase slightly from last year.

Fourteen synchronized skating teams competed this winter in five international competitions, including the Miami University collegiate team at the Winter World University Games in Harbin, China. We were happy with the results and look forward to the World Synchronized Skating Championships.

A great deal of effort for the remainder of the spring will be focused on hosting the fourth Synchronized Skating Training Festival, June 25-29, 2009.

Athlete Funding

Direct athlete support is delivered to the athletes in various methods from U.S. Figure Skating and the USOC. Developmental Team grants provide funding for juvenile, intermediate and novice skaters. Additionally, Memorial Fund's athletic and academic grants and scholarships are awarded to athletes who have demonstrated outstanding competitive results and/or academic achievements. ASUPP funding is designed to financially aid athletes in the A, B and C envelopes. Enhanced Operation Gold funding offers a bonus program to U.S. athletes for medal-winning performances at 11 identified events. PET funding provides A and B envelope athletes with funding to achieve specific objectives. Elite Athlete Health Insurance (EAHI) is supplied to as many as 18 of U.S. Figure Skating's world-class athletes. Having these programs in place allows U.S. Figure Skating to financially assist athletes at the various stages of their development.

Sports Sciences and Medicine Programs

U.S. Figure Skating's Sports Sciences and Medicine Director Charlene Boudreau has had a busy and productive year. The role and importance of each sports sciences and medicine program is easily defined and recognized, but the relationships among these programs is what makes each one essential to the effectiveness of the overall effort.

The integration of sports sciences and medicine into the variety of camps, competitions and seminars offered by U.S. Figure Skating introduces athlete-specific testing and feedback to monitor and improve athlete health and development as well as educates parents, athletes and coaches. These sessions during the camps, competitions and seminars deal with issues related to science, health and performance, and raise the awareness and development of athleticism to strengthen the basic skating skills of young skaters. Topics at these sessions are guided in part by the results of research, what our National Network learns from the skating community at large and the strengths and weaknesses among skaters at various competitive levels.

The development of a National Network of sports medicine and science professionals and online directory will make the performance-related services of physicians, trainers, therapists, nutritionists, psychologists, etc., available to skaters, coaches and parents nationwide and enhance skaters' access to routine care and performance services in their home training location. The National Network will serve as the professional training program for sports medicine and science practitioners who will eventually become team physicians and contributing members of the Sports Sciences and Medicine Committee. The pipeline of sports medicine and science professionals has the potential to reduce injury occurrence and increases skaters' potential to succeed. The National Network is our eyes and ears in the science and medical community to guide topic development for focus groups, educational seminars and web site material. The National Network and web site serve as major education outreach avenues to disseminate what we learn from seminars, focus groups and research studies. Development of our web site is essential for recruiting and application processes associated with the National Network.

The development of *S.T.A.R.S.* (Skater Talent and Athleticism Recognition System) is based primarily on the need to promote robust, all-around fitness in young American skaters; to push and maintain the athletic ability curve ahead of the skills curve; to ensure that young figure skaters are physically prepared to handle the introduction of new, more complex and more demanding skating skills; and to reduce the potential for injury typically sustained during the training of these new skills. This program can only be carried out through testing with appropriate equipment and human resources. The launching of *S.T.A.R.S.* has been delayed until the appropriate technological support is established.

Testing is important in tracking career development and in-season response to training. Proper equipment is essential to carry out testing and assessment activities. Testing is a critical component of the *S.T.A.R.S.* program and elite athlete monitoring. Regular testing and assessment also helps us identify the physical and psychological strengths and weaknesses of our skaters at all levels.

A sophisticated motion analysis system at the University of Delaware is being developed and made possible through USOC and PSA funding. Athletes will have access to this system by the end of spring or early summer 2009.

Research and education is a necessary investment for the future of figure skating. It is our best opportunity to effectively review and quantify important figure skating science and medical issues, such as injury occurrence, injury prevention, cutting-edge equipment and technology, nutrition, strength and conditioning, physiology, psychology and biomechanics. A research grant program administered by U.S. Figure Skating will advance our knowledge on pressing performance-related issues and encourage U.S. scientists to conduct scientific research relevant to winning medals and keeping U.S. Figure Skating on the leading edge of sports science worldwide.

Discussions are already underway for the review of medical volunteer interest, eligibility and availability for the 2009-10 competition calendar. This year's process will incorporate the new "report cards" and formalized feedback received from the 2008-09 season. Doping control education continues to take high priority, especially since new, specific rules went into effect on January 1, 2009. U.S. Figure Skating remains involved in discussions with the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) and ISU on procedural consolidations and rule adherence. The medical services sub-committee is also in the process of reviewing and updating the medical guidelines provided to local organizing committees.

By invitation, sport sciences and medicine was represented at two important meetings, namely the PSA National Education Committee meeting (December) and the U.S. Figure Skating International Committee Management Subcommittee (ICMS) brainstorming session (January). Charlene Boudreau has also been working closely with the director of PET to help establish a solid investment strategy that bridges the gap between daily training and competition performance. These types of activities represent a positive step toward the required integration of factors impacting athlete and coach development and performance. In addition, sport sciences and medicine was represented at two USOC conferences, the Annual National Team Coaches conference and the High Performance Sustainability conference. Information garnered via these conferences confirmed that U.S. Figure Skating's efforts in sport sciences and medicine are on the right track. More specifically, these conferences re-emphasized the need for solid seasonal planning, with education and awareness in the area of growth/development.

Sport sciences and medicine was also active in four educational conferences and meetings, including a focus group on off-ice conditioning (host, December, Colorado Springs), 2009 Reach for the Stars (presenter, December, Lake Placid), 2009 Team 2014 (presenter, January, Cleveland) and the annual meeting of Sports Medicine and Science in Figure Skating (host, January, Cleveland). More than a dozen presentations were provided to skaters, coaches, parents and practitioners on the topics of seasonal and career planning, growth and development, doping control, lifestyle management and injury prevention. A nutrition series of handouts was also developed for mass distribution at the U.S. Championships in Cleveland. With the help of committee members, Charlene Boudreau continues to work on a new and updated edition of the PSA's *Guide to Sports Science and Medicine*. The new edition is expected to be released at the 2009 PSA International Conference in Orlando, Fla. All presentations and literature are posted on the sports medicine section of the U.S. Figure Skating web site.

Sport sciences and medicine continues to work on the development of technical requirements for an athlete tracking database. The scope of the project is large, and three IT groups have been interviewed for project fit. Based on USOC funding and/or a sponsorship package, a company could be named soon. Along with *S.T.A.R.S.*, other sport

sciences and medicine initiatives are also tightly linked to this project (and the required technical support) including the seasonal injury/illness survey and medical registry upgrade.

In conclusion, the athlete high performance department takes an army of staff and volunteers to accomplish its mission. I would like to thank Kelly Hodge, Julie Schmitz, Mary-Elizabeth Wightman, Charlene Boudreau and Kathy Casey for their 100% dedication to U.S. Figure Skating. Additionally, I would like to especially thank Jessica Gaynor, Brittney Bottoms, Lorrie Parker, Ben Miller, Justin Dillon, Jackie Brenner, Janis Engel, Deveny Deck, Dr. George Shybut, Hal Marron, Gerald Miele, Ann Fauver, Dann Krueger, Karen Sherr, Rebecca Search and their committee members for the many hours of volunteer service over the year to help with all of the athlete programs.

Marketing and Communications

By Ramsey Baker, Senior Director

Sponsorship

The 2008-09 season was the second year working with NBC as our television partner and first full year working with Van Wagner Sports, headed by Cliff Kaplan, as our sponsorship agency. Prior to Skate America, U.S. Figure Skating welcomed State Farm back to the sponsorship family. The one year deal with State Farm included media, signage, icnetwork.com exposure and marketing rights. Prior to the U.S. Championships, AT&T was brought on as the title sponsor of the U.S. Championships as part of a two-year partnership and Smucker's returned to the sponsorship family becoming the title sponsor of the Skating Spectacular. In addition to the title sponsorships, we were able to sell over 85% of our advertising inventory for the U.S. Championships and Skating Spectacular despite a stagnant media buying market. The remaining 15% of the inventory was used to promote the organization through public service announcements, icnetwork.com and to add value to our cornerstone partners' media packages to ensure that impression targets were met.

The final list of sponsors (*) and media buyers for the U.S. Championships included:

- AT&T*
- Smucker's*
- State Farm*
- SC Johnson (Glade)
- Bally Fitness
- Perio (shaving gel)
- Lumber Liquidators
- Tru Credit.com

During the U.S. Championships guests from AT&T, Smucker's and potential partner P&G were entertained in the sponsor hospitality suite. Planning is ongoing with AT&T regarding how to maximize the potential of the partnership for both AT&T and U.S. Figure Skating. We are also already engaged in discussions with Smucker's, State Farm and P&G regarding next season and beyond. Additional sponsor prospects will be hosted at the 2009 ISU World Figure Skating Championships as well.

In addition to the television partners listed above, U.S. Figure Skating signed a new trial partnership with K12, an online schooling and tutoring provider used by athletes in many sports, including figure skating, who are training at the elite level. The one-year arrangement with K12 included marketing rights and online exposure via icnetwork.com.

We continued our affinity credit card partnership with U.S. Bank Visa and we continue to pace new card holders at the projected rate they outlined for our card program. The agreement includes guaranteed revenue for the next two years with a revenue share model in the last three years of the agreement.

Hilton continues to provide value in kind (VIK) as a return on dollars spent by U.S. Figure Skating and by fans/members through our dedicated online booking portal. Portal usage continues to increase each quarter as more members and fans become accustomed to using the figure skating booking site. We have also directed more organization business towards Hilton Family properties, earning U.S. Figure Skating a rebate per room night

consumed. United continues as a partner of the USOC and through their national governing body (NGB) program as a supplier to U.S. Figure Skating, providing VIK travel credit based on our ticket buying habits.

The spring and early summer months will be used to identify new categories and companies that are in their sports marketing budgeting cycle with the intention of securing additional partners for the coming Olympic season and beyond. The current list of ongoing discussions includes Paul Mitchell, Nestle, Amgen, Platex, Kimberly Clark and P&G.

Publications & Graphic Design

The first ever SKATING magazine Basic Skills Edition, a cross-departmental project last summer, produced a 16-page publication that was distributed to every Basic Skills member household, becoming the first direct-mail/messaging piece that U.S. Figure Skating has sent to these members. The magazine, which was well received by members and program directors, featured a welcome from Michelle Kwan, a pull-out poster highlighting Mirai Nagasu, Rachael Flatt and Caroline Zhang and a series of skater trading cards. The magazine was designed to last throughout the season, with articles on finding the right coach, getting the most out of your skating, basic skating techniques and more. In addition to the regular event publications for Skate America and U.S. Championships, the publication department produced the event program for the 2009 World Championships. The rulebook and directory were once again completed on an aggressive timeline and were made available to judges in a timely manner. The graphic design department continued to work across departments throughout the organization, bringing new designs and creativity to publications and enhancing the outward facing look of the organization.

Media/PR

In addition to preparations for Skate America and U.S. Championships, the media/public relations department oversaw the credentialing process and pre-event media planning for the 2009 World Championships in Los Angeles. Several media/pr events were held throughout the year in Everett, Cleveland and Los Angeles in association with key ticketing dates and local annual events. The partnerships with local media in Everett helped lead to record-setting ticket sales for the event. A hometown media program focusing on Junior Grand Prix and Senior B events was introduced in the fall of 2008 with good success. Athlete-specific releases were generated each week and sent to skaters and to their local media in an effort to garner more grassroots media exposure. The program compliments the efforts being done by the membership department with the goal of increasing awareness and getting more people in rinks. In addition, Headquarters provided more pre-event and on-site support to all U.S. Championship events and pre-event assistance for regional and sectional events in the area of media relations. Preparations have already begun for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games with planning for media summits for Olympic hopefuls with both the USOC and NBC.

Friends of Figure Skating (FOFS) & Memorial Fund

With the hiring of a new senior director of development there was a shift of the day-to-day management of the FOFS and Memorial Fund into the development department. The two departments continue to work closing together to transfer knowledge on planning activities and the marketing of the events that support FOFS and the Memorial Fund. A FOFS renewal campaign began in late July/early August 2008, and response was strong despite the weak economy, and although membership did not increase dramatically, revenue did increase. A special FOFS function was planned for the 2009 World Championships. The new FOFS calendar was designed (in-house) and printed (at a reduced rate with the donation of a local printer) and was available for all members. The calendar was photographed at the 2008 Champs Camp and features senior level U.S. Championship medalists from 2008 and 2008 World Junior champions. The traditional thank you breakfasts were held in Everett during Skate America and Cleveland at the U.S. Championships, both setting records for attendance. The "Gold Medal Wish" program that was adapted for U.S. Championships in 2008 was once again implemented in Everett and Cleveland.

Web (.org, icenetwork.com and online store)

Online store sales were up 30% for the year that ended in September 2008. This is the fourth consecutive year of growth which has totaled 325% over the past four years (2004-05 vs. 2007-08). Total merchandise sales were also up again up, reaching nearly \$230,000 for the year despite having four fewer events at which merchandise was sold. Online sales figures for the 2008-09 season (which will close at the end of September 2009) are tracking at a rate 37% above last season.

A working committee was established as a liaison with Headquarters and our online host/design company (Winnercomm) to implement a redesign of the .org site. The time table for the project originally planned for the project to be completed in January 2009; however, budgets were realigned and the project was deferred to the summer of 2009. The focus of the project remains to be on the home page, including improving navigation, reducing clutter and refocusing the site to meet the needs of the core audience of members (current and potential).

Icenetwork.com grew and enhanced its coverage significantly over the past year. Coverage of the 2009 qualifying season was more efficient and timely with the posting of the first weekend of regional competition just one day after the events concluded. The timing of event video to on-demand availability was reduced with new systems in place. Additionally, score posting was streamlined for the fall events and delay between event conclusion and scores posting declined. At the U.S. Championships real-time scoring was introduced and later replicated during the U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships and will be used exclusively for all qualifying events next season.

Internationally, icenetwork.com acquired the rights to several ISU championship events, including the entire ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series for distribution in the U.S. The international event calendar kicked off with Skate America and runs through the new ISU Team Trophy event. An advertising and marketing plan for icenetwork.com kicked-off at the end of October with ads appearing in print, online and across NBC coverage of skating events. The result was more than a 55% increase in subscribers to the site and traffic numbers that exceeded 1.3 million unique visitors to the site, nearly 40 million page views and more than three million video streams that generated over 200,000 hours of video through February 2009.

Events

By Bob Dunlop, Senior Director

This past season was another strong year for U.S. Figure Skating events on and off the ice in terms of competitor experiences and successful event management between U.S. Figure Skating and the many local organizing committees (LOCs) across the country.

Regional and Sectional Championships

The 2009 Regional Championships were presented with unique challenges and subsequent opportunities allowing us to look further into the structure of these nine events. The initial assignment of dates for the 2009 qualifying competition season conflicted with two major Jewish holidays resulting in date changes for six of the nine Regional Championships as well as a location change for the Southwestern Regional Championships. The six regional championships affected were moved from the traditional Tuesday-Saturday schedule to a Thursday/Friday-Tuesday schedule. A post-event survey was conducted resulting in overwhelmingly positive feedback from the participating LOC's and competitors regarding the schedule change. U.S. Figure Skating has implemented a change to the assigned days for the 2010 and 2011 qualifying competition seasons, moving to a Friday-Tuesday competition structure, with the goal of minimizing school absences and maximizing the number of family members who are guaranteed to see an initial round on a weekend.

Monetarily, the regional championships were a financial success for the LOC's. The average profit of those who have currently reported is \$35,000 per regional. Although there are many underlying factors in hosting an event, the financial data from year to year shows that the regional can make a profit in any of the nine regions.

The LOC's for the three sectional championships reported successful events and among the two who have submitted their financial reports are showing profits of \$25,000 and higher. The Midwestern Sectional Championships were hosted in a joint effort by the Houston FSC and the Texas Gulf Coast FSC and held in Sugarland, Texas. Positive feedback was reported by both regarding the co-hosting of these championships.

For the 2009 season, all pairs and dance teams (including juvenile and intermediate levels) were required to compete at the Sectional Championships in order to qualify for advancement to the U.S. Championships or U.S. Junior Championships. This was the first year this requirement was in place and it garnered positive feedback from the LOC's and in particular the competitors and coaches. It raised entry numbers (and subsequently, entry fee revenue) and practice ice revenue and gave a boost to an event that has been struggling in years past.

The overall registration numbers for the 2009 qualifying competition season showed a small decline from those who entered the 2008 season. Actual competitors dropped from 2,683 in 2008 to 2,486 in 2009 with actual entries showing a similar decline to 2,283 from 2,457 in 2008. The North Atlantic (59 entries) and Eastern Great Lakes (31 entries) showed the largest decrease in actual entries based on the close of entries on Sept. 1, 2008.

Currently, the organizing committees for the 2010 regional and sectional championships are deep into their planning process. Many are working with U.S. Figure Skating's in-house graphic designer to finalize the official event logos. U.S. Figure Skating and the LOC's are working together to identify and secure local sponsorship in an increasingly difficult environment. Last year, U.S. Figure Skating issued each LOC a sponsorship guidelines document that assists in this process. All signs are pointing toward a positive experience for all during the 2010 qualifying competition season.

The bid packages for the 2011 qualifying competition season are currently open and are posted on the events section of the U.S. Figure Skating web site. Additionally, interested clubs can access past historical data on entries, previous year's hosts and financials that the interested LOC can use as a reference in preparing their bids. The due date for completed bid packages for the 2011 season is May 13, 2009.

2009 U.S. Junior Figure Skating Championships

The 2009 U.S. Junior Championships returned to Lake Placid, N.Y., for the first time since 2003. This was the first year that entries for juvenile and intermediate pairs and dance qualified from each of the three sectional championships (top eight from each) rather than on a calculation from the percentage plan (singles competitors still advance from regional championships based on the percentage plan). This decreased the number of entries in the pairs and dance event but, overall, increased the quality of the competition as in years past, all of the teams at these levels in the country advanced to the U.S. Junior Championships. Financially, the event was again a success, projecting a profit of at least \$30,000, as it has proven to be one of the more consistently profitable ventures within our qualifying competition season, averaging a profit of more than \$45,000 the past four years leading into the 2009 event.

The 2010 U.S. Junior Championships were recently awarded to the Greater Cleveland Council of Figure Skating Clubs and will be hosted December 15-19, 2009, at Hoover Arena in Strongsville, Ohio. The event will be held a week later in December than in years past, partly due to the three sectional championships being pushed back a week because of the later dates for 2009 Skate America.

2008 Skate America

In October, Everett, Wash., played host to Skate America, marking the return of the competition to the west coast for the first time since Spokane, Wash., hosted record crowds in 2002. Everett proved to be an outstanding host for the event and showcased first class facilities (Comcast Arena and Tulalip Resort) and record crowds. The event attracted a total attendance of 29,477 raising the bar from the previous mark of 28,664 set in 2002. Feedback from the athletes, coaches, officials and the ISU was outstanding during and after the event, providing us many reasons to return to Everett in the future.

2009 AT&T U.S. Figure Skating Championships

The U.S. Championships returned to Cleveland for the first time since 2000 when it set an attendance record at that time. Faced with a different economic picture locally, the event was unable to match its previous attendance mark, but a number of notable positives came from this event. Local activation in media and sponsorship was evident with 22 local companies supporting the championships. Media attendance was equally as strong with activation by all affiliates and advanced support for marketing and promotion efforts in the months leading into the event. Financially, the event was a positive that will provide a lasting legacy to both U.S. Figure Skating and the entire skating community in the Cleveland area.

2009 ISU World Figure Skating Championships

Although not completed at the time of this report, U.S. Figure Skating ended the event season domestically by hosting the 2009 World Figure Skating Championships in Los Angeles, Calif. A culmination of two years in planning with the local organizing committee and the ISU, the event attracted 222 athletes from 52 nations within

the ISU. The event marked the 12th time in its 99-year history that the U.S. has hosted the World Championships and the first time since 2003 when Washington, D.C., served as host.

Despite a tough economic climate, advanced ticket sales are very impressive, promising a strong atmosphere for all competitors in the final World Championships prior to the Olympics. The site plan in Los Angeles is outstanding with both venues within 100 yards of each other and the official hotels within six blocks. Media attention in the year before the Olympic Games is very strong with approximately 400 print and photographers expected to attend, as well as another 400 television rights holders in attendance.

2009 ISU Junior Grand Prix Series

Looking ahead to next season, planning is well underway for what promises to be another busy and exciting season. The international season will begin quickly in the U.S. next season with the second event in the ISU Junior Grand Prix Series returning to Lake Placid, N.Y., Sept. 2-6. This marks the second time in three years that Lake Placid will host a Junior Grand Prix event following a successful event in 2007.

2009 Skate America

Just two months later, U.S. Figure Skating will return to Lake Placid, Nov. 12-15, to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Skate America in its birthplace. Plans are underway to unveil a special 30th anniversary event logo at the 2009 Governing Council as well as a season-long marketing effort building on the history of the event and the athletes who contributed to its success. Skate America will take place just three months prior to the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver, promising an exciting backdrop to this event.

2010 AT&T U.S. Figure Skating Championships

The 2010 AT&T U.S. Figure Skating Championships will return to Spokane, Wash., after a record-setting event in 2007. With less than a month between the U.S. Championships and the 2010 Olympic Games, the crowds are again expected to be record-setting, providing our athletes the atmosphere they deserve at the U.S. Championships. Following the selection of Spokane in May 2008, the initial ticket launch broke the existing ticket sales mark previously set in Spokane, garnering the event more than \$1.7 million in ticket sales in the first 72 hours. Planning is also well underway for next year with the site visit being completed in April with NBC Sports, U.S. Figure Skating and the LOC.

2010 ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships

Following the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver, U.S. Figure Skating will organize and host the final international competition of the season when the ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships take place in Colorado Springs, Colo., April 6-10, 2010. This marks the return of the World Synchronized Skating Championships to the U.S. for the first time since Minneapolis hosted the inaugural championships in 2000. Planning for the event is well underway locally. The official website, www.2010synchroworlds.com was launched April 1 to coincide with the 2009 World Synchronized Skating Championships in Zagreb, Croatia. U.S. Figure Skating staff was in attendance in Croatia in an observer role and conducted pre-planning meetings with the ISU. U.S. Figure Skating will host the ISU for the formal site visit in August 2009.

2011 U.S. Figure Skating Championships

Following a six month process, the city of Greensboro, N.C., was confirmed to host the 2011 U.S. Figure Skating Championships. Offered as a statewide bid, the Greensboro Coliseum will serve as the host venue that will attract residents from across North Carolina and provide a positive boost to the sport of figure skating in the state. Olympic silver medalist Paul Wylie, who currently resides in Charlotte, N.C., will serve as honorary chairman for the event. A complete marketing push including the launch of all-event ticket sales and the debut of the official web site www.northcarolina2011.com began in March.

2012 U.S. Figure Skating Championships

In early March, U.S. Figure Skating distributed a request for letters of interest to host the 2012 U.S. Championships. This inquiry was sent to all U.S. Figure Skating clubs, posted online and also distributed to the National Association of Sports Commissions. The deadline for responses was April 17. Based on the response, a full bid process will now commence with the goal to have a recommendation by the Events Advisory Board to U.S. Figure Skating's Board of Directors by the fall of 2009.

Development

By Kevin Burns, Senior Director

The following report represents goals achieved, projects started, special initiatives “under construction”, and general highlights of the work being done since the development department started on April 28, 2008, and I attended the 2008 Governing Council Meeting in Denver, Colo.

Conducted Field Research w/ Key Volunteers Nationwide. From April-September 2008 personal meetings were arranged with key volunteers to help determine and discover the expectations of the development department as this new function evolved. Informal interviews and “get to know you” visits were held with board members, club leaders and existing and prospective donors to understand first-hand the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead.

Presentation of Findings to the Board of Directors. In October 2008 a presentation of the goals and objectives of the department was given to the Board of Directors for review and comment. The presentation included the synopsis of the field research conducted and support for launching a fully integrated development program that consisted of annual giving, major gift identification/cultivation, planned giving marketing, foundation giving and special events.

Created Comprehensive Menu of Giving Opportunities. Based on feedback from volunteers and staff, action was taken to identify and begin to market the benefits of seeking charitable gifts for specific areas of interest. The areas defined include (in alphabetical order) Adult Skating, Athlete Development, Basic Skills, Collegiate Programs, Ice Dancing, Judges/Coaches Education, Memorial Fund, Museum Collection/Preservation, Pairs, Singles, Sports Sciences & Medicine, Synchronized Skating, Theatre on Ice, Area of Greatest Need.

Launched Inaugural Direct Mail Invitation Campaign. In early December 2008 more than 25,000 “unique households” received a direct mail piece inviting a charitable contribution to be made to any one of the areas listed above. To date, 86 gifts have been made, generating approximately \$20,000. The total cost of this project was a modest \$12,000.

Launched Dedicated Giving Web Pages on the U.S. Figure Skating Web Site. To compliment the annual giving efforts, new web pages linked from the U.S. Figure Skating home page (“Support U.S. Figure Skating”) provide a full spectrum of information about how and what to give to U.S. Figure Skating as well as information concerning estate planning options. Visits to these dedicated web pages are measured quarterly by the host company, The Stelter Group.

Completed Analytical Review of U.S. Figure Skating Membership. With the support of Qbase, members 21 years of age and over have been fully “screened” to determine ability and propensity to support U.S. Figure Skating in a charitable way. The raw data has been reviewed by the senior director of development as well as select senior staff. Appropriate application of information (developing strategies to engage prospects) is being determined.

Re-Designed Friends of Figure Skating (FOFS) Brochure. With the support of marketing and design staff, reworked the “look and feel” of the FOFS brochure and began marketing the 2008-09 membership drive. To date, FOFS boasts 496 members and has generated more than \$53,235.

Special Events Set for U.S. Championships in Cleveland. On Friday, January 23, U.S. Figure Skating, in association with the World Figure Skating Museum and Hall of Fame, hosted a ticketed U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame reception/cocktail party at this year’s U.S. Championships. U.S. Figure Skating’s senior director of development was appointed the liaison with the organizers to ensure a successful and profitable event.

Also on Friday, January 23, the U.S. Figure Skating Memorial Fund Committee hosted its inaugural special event fundraiser entitled “*Rock, Roll and Remember*”. For a \$25 contribution to the Memorial Fund, guests were invited to enjoy food, a cash bar, and the opportunity to mingle with figure skating athletes of today and yesterday. This event was coordinated by Memorial Fund Committee chairperson, Leslie Gianelli along with U.S. Figure Skating’s senior director of development

Major Gifts from Individuals and Foundations. We are proud to announce the execution of an estate gift from Mr. Paul Hagle (Rancho Mirage, Calif.) worth an estimated \$300,000 (current value) to be used for athlete development efforts. In addition, we are awaiting confirmation on a \$50,000 grant from the Robert V. Hauff and John F. Dreeland Foundation (New York, N.Y.) to benefit U.S. Figure Skating's Basic Skills Program. The final gift agreement has been executed for the gift from Joyce Komperda (\$250,000) and documents are being drafted about how best to award grants from this fund – the *Joyce Komperda Athlete Support Fund* – to eligible athletes. Just less than \$25,000 has been received from the Estate of Cecilia Colledge to establish the *Cecilia Colledge Athlete Support Fund*.

Prepared Gift Acceptance Policy and Acceptance, Acknowledgement and Accounting Policy. In concert with the executive director and senior director of finance, a formal gift acceptance policy and acceptance, acknowledgement and accounting policy is being finalized to ensure that gifts directed to any one of U.S. Figure Skating's designated funds are earmarked accordingly for specific programs.

World Figure Skating Team Documentary Film Concept. U.S. Figure Skating's associate executive director and senior director of development are working with select film and documentary film makers on the concept of producing a film that captures the legacy of the 1961 World Figure Skating Team in preparation for the 50th anniversary of the tragedy. Meetings with renowned film maker Frank Marshall, as well as documentary film producers, O'Malley/Creadon Productions, have been held, and additional details are being shared with both.

World Hall of Fame Reception at 2009 World Championships. The senior director of development will be working along side the World Hall of Fame committee for the execution of the March 28 reception during the World Championships. The goal is to host more than 250 people.

Friends of Figure Skating (FOFS) Reception at 2009 World Championships. The senior director of development is coordinating a FOFS reception on Saturday afternoon, March 28, for an estimated 150 FOFS members. Incorporated into this reception will be a small live auction to help generate additional revenue for U.S. Figure Skating.

Memorial Fund Grants to Athletes. On behalf of Memorial Fund Committee chairperson, Leslie Gianelli, we are proud to report that this year's Memorial Fund grant application and award process was successful in terms of total applications, grants approved and monies awarded. The 2008-09 season summary is as follows:

Total Memorial Fund Grants Awarded:	160
Total Dollar Value of Memorial Grants:	\$305,925.50
Total CSAP Grants Awarded:	123
Total Dollar Value of Grants:	\$260,410.44
Average CSAP Grant Awarded:	\$2,117.16
Total ASP Grants Awarded:	40
Total Dollar Value of Grants:	\$45,515.06
Average ASP Grant Awarded:	\$1,137.88

Finance

By Mario R. Rede, Senior Director

Since my last report, the finance department has completed the 2010 budgeting cycle which began on November 3, 2008, and ended on February 22, 2009, with the presentation to the Board of Directors in Chicago. As is reflected in the enclosed budget, U.S. Figure Skating is projected to generate \$12 million in revenue and operate on \$12.4 million of expenses. The Association will need to draw from its cash reserves in the amount of \$431,000 in order to produce a balanced budget. I would like to thank the group coordinators, committee chairs, and Finance Committee members in working collectively with their Headquarter liaisons in meeting the timelines that had been established for this budgeting cycle.

Additionally, the finance department has completed preparation of the 2007 Form 990 and 990T income tax returns for the association. This information has been submitted to the Internal Revenue Service in a timely and efficient manner. Finally, the finance department is working diligently with the Audit Committee chair and members in preparation for the 2008-09 fiscal year end audit.

Despite the current economic conditions the association remains financially strong and stable. In working with the executive director and treasurer, the finance department continuously seeks ways to achieve maximum cost effectiveness while strengthening our internal controls.

It has been another productive year for the finance department and U.S. Figure Skating. I would like to thank the executive director and treasurer for their continued support.

Information Technology

By Mark Vogtner, Senior Director

The information technology (IT) department at U.S. Figure Skating is focused on streamlining business processes throughout the organization in order to increase staff efficiency and provide the best possible online experience for our members, coaches, officials and everyone interested in the sport. In pursuit of these goals, Internet (online) related technologies continue to play a key role in enabling information to be gathered and disseminated more rapidly, conveniently and efficiently.

Some of the major accomplishments this year

In the Members Only Site (www.usfsoonline.org) and Member Management System (MMS):

- The new coach registration process was made available online.
- Credit card security code processing (CVV) has been implemented on all competition registration processes to ensure greater security and reduce transaction costs.
- Member profile processes, including skater tests, skater events (with online participant certificate printing), temporary membership card printing and password management, were enhanced to create a better online experience.
- The processes impacted by the Basic Skills membership year timeframe change were updated.
- The newly created collegiate membership type was made available online.

Increasing Staff Efficiency and Effectiveness:

- More than 30 online forms have been developed to provide a more efficient means of collecting information in the following areas: Memorial Fund, officials' availability, team leader evaluations, ballots, member surveys, seminar registration and event ticket sales. This elimination of paper forms promotes a much more efficient flow of information and reduces expenses.
- With our new e-blast server, over 120 e-blasts have been performed in support of marketing, membership and event functions. This new server enables us to track the effectiveness of e-mail campaigns and helps us fine tune e-mail communications.
- The basic infrastructure for the Microsoft SharePoint business collaboration tool has been completed. This will help facilitate staff communication and the management of business documents.
- IT work-request tracking software was installed to ensure the completion of tasks and provide historical views of work accomplished.

Other Efforts Include:

- As a cost-saving measure, all computer equipment life cycles have been extended approximately 25%.
- Color printing capabilities will be greatly enhanced in order to eliminate the outside printing costs of low volume jobs.

We are continually looking at ways that we can apply information technology to improve our business functions at U.S. Figure Skating. Our future project focus will be in enhancing staff and volunteer collaboration as well as improving the online experience for our membership base.

As you can see, Headquarters is working hard to support and implement the policies and needs of U.S. Figure Skating. From all the staff, we thank you for the opportunity to work with the BEST volunteers in the Olympic family!

**Report of the Officers and Representatives
2009 Board of Directors and Governing Council Meetings
May 2009**

Eastern Vice President – Shawn Rettstatt

Report not available at time of publication

Midwestern Vice President – Pat St. Peter

This year, I again held monthly conference calls with the Midwestern club and interclub association presidents to provide a forum to share ideas and information, listen to the clubs' issues and concerns, seek their input, and most importantly, engender their involvement. At the suggestion of the participants last year, I combined all three regions into a single call this year so that all could hear what was happening in the other Midwest regions. The response to this format has been uniformly positive. Among the "special guests" who participated this year and shared information about their programs and projects were Judy Edmunds, national vice chair for theatre on ice; Karin Sherr, chair of the Synchronized Skating Committee; Kelly Hodge, director of synchronized skating and collegiate programs; Roland Bessette, chair of the Program Development Committee; Mike Meyer, membership development group coordinator; Ann O'Keefe, administrative/legal group coordinator; and Susi Wehrli, senior director of membership, who provided information regarding the Bridge Program, National Skating Month activities, the results of surveys conducted this past year, and the progress of Headquarters' projects relating to membership. I want to thank these "special guests" and also acknowledge and thank Susi Wehrli and Maureen Dalton, chair of the Membership Committee, for their regular participation in the calls and for the valuable input they provided every month. I also want to acknowledge and thank those club and interclub association representatives who participated in the calls this year for their contributions and dedication to their organizations and U.S. Figure Skating.

In addition to holding monthly conference calls, I attended nonqualifying competitions in each of the three regions last summer and met with local club officials and other volunteers to hear about their programs and listen to their issues and concerns. Generally, the concerns expressed by club representatives and members throughout the three Midwest regions are consistent. The top concern for all is the challenge we are facing with retaining skaters in light of the current economic situation. Other concerns that were discussed include the significant drop-off in participation in qualifying competitions beginning at the juvenile level; whether bringing the International Judging System (IJS) down to the juvenile and intermediate levels has had a negative impact on participation and/or membership; how to get skaters to advance from Basic Skills Programs into clubs; issues regarding organizing and hosting competition events and management of events; the need for more technical panel officials in all categories to staff nonqualifying competitions; the rising cost of purchasing ice; the need to improve and update U.S. Figure Skating's web site; the need for better marketing of the competitive test track; the need for better education for parents; and the rising costs of the sport. Many excellent ideas were shared as to how many of these issues can be addressed. Obviously, there are no quick and easy answers. However, one thing that is clear is that as we work through these challenging times, communication will be ever more essential. A continued strong club base and an informed and engaged membership are critical for the future success of U.S. Figure Skating.

I want to congratulate and thank the following local organizing committees (LOCs) and their volunteers for the countless hours they spent in organizing and hosting regional and sectional competitions this year:

- Eastern Great Lakes Regional Championships – hosted by the Midland FSC
- Southwestern Regional Championships – hosted by the Broadmoor SC
- Upper Great Lakes Regional Championships – hosted by the St. Paul FSC
- Midwestern Sectional Championships – co-hosted by the Houston FSC and the Texas Gulf Coast FSC
- Midwestern/Pacific Coast Synchronized Skating Sectional Championships – hosted by the Rocky Mountain FSC
- Midwestern Adult Sectional Championships – hosted by the Wyandotte FSC

I also want to congratulate and thank all of those who contributed extraordinary amounts of time and other resources to make the 2009 AT&T U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Cleveland a success.

This year, U.S. Figure Skating took a major step to protect the safety and well-being of minors who participate in figure skating with the adoption of the coaches' registration and mandatory background screening requirements. I would like to acknowledge and thank all of the coaching members of U.S. Figure Skating for their support and their compliance with these new requirements. I also want to acknowledge the efforts of all of the LOCs who assisted in enforcing this new requirement. In addition to the support given by the coaches and membership, it took a team at Headquarters to work through the myriad of administrative logistics in order to implement these new requirements for coaching members. A huge thank you is extended to Kathy Dreves, Susi Wehrli, Jim Fox, Dalean Greenlee, Mark Vogtner, Regina Rodriguez, Mitch Moyer, and Zeffer Betts for all of their ingenuity, time and patience in implementing these new requirements.

Looking forward, U.S. Figure Skating, like every organization, is presently facing many financial and organizational challenges. As difficult as these times may be, I view this as an opportunity for U.S. Figure Skating to re-examine, re-evaluate, build on its existing strengths and shore up operational weaknesses so that it will emerge as a stronger organization once the economy eventually rebounds. I commit to you that I will devote the time necessary to serve U.S. Figure Skating to ensure that it remains in stable financial condition through this economic downturn to enable our elite athletes to continue to excel with the goal of medals in all disciplines at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games and to allow our "grassroots" programs to expand.

Finally, thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as the Midwestern vice president. It has been a great honor to hold this position.

Pacific Coast Vice President – Charles Cyr

The sport of figure skating continues to be an important part in my life which is not very different from that of many new and old members of U.S. Figure Skating. The Pacific Coast continues to be the smallest contingency representing the sport at its yearly meeting but by no means are we shrinking violets. The Pacific Coast continues to embrace the challenges with which the sport is dealing and support its tremendous athletes.

At the time of this report, the Pacific Coast is gearing up to host the ISU World Figure Skating Championships in Los Angeles, Calif. Having the World Championships in Southern California has generated great interest in the skating world with a record number of athletes planning to compete. Though all sports are feeling the "pinch" of an unpredictable economy, these World Championships are still showing a great interest in attendance. By the time, this governing body meets in May the 2009 World Championships will be history and, I am sure, will be ranked as one of the most memorable.

The economy continues to be a mystery to all, and its effects on skating are certainly being felt. The viability of clubs, rinks and athletes continue to be on the front burner. I know U.S. Figure Skating will be forced to make many important decisions in the coming months. I can assure you that the leadership continues to hold the association and its constituents to the highest level of importance. It goes without saying that new and innovative ideas to maintain U.S. Figure Skating on the cutting edge and not the bleeding edge are continuously being explored.

Being the vice president of U.S. Figure Skating has changed dramatically since I have been on the Board of Directors. I have seen many changes in the association in my tenure as a member of the board, and I am pleased to pass the torch to Jessica Gaynor. Her logical mind, organizational skills and passion to do what is "right" for the sport will be readily welcomed by the leadership.

I have thoroughly enjoyed being part of the leadership for the past 16 years. I started on the board when Kristi Yamaguchi won her Olympic gold medal. I saw the Board of Directors grow to 36 with an Executive Committee, and then shrink systematically to its current size. I have seen Beanie Babies come and go (my family collected 350 of them!) and I have seen the association's budget grow and then be cut back. I have been part of many committees and continue to be a student of the sport and humbled by many of the volunteers who continue to contribute countless hours. With all these changes, cut backs, and new innovations, U.S. Figure Skating athletes have always been of prime importance.

Having watched the athletes emerge as a viable part of the association's governance has been wonderful to experience. As a member of the board, I have experienced the athletes being the "step children" sitting in the back at Governing Council and now sitting in the front, organized, respected, and willing to take the lead whenever asked. They have chosen their leaders wisely and continue to hold all members of their constituency accountable.

I would never have been able to be so involved in a sport I love without the complete support of my wife and daughters. They allowed me to accept responsibility without question. I continue to be enthusiastic about U.S. Figure Skating and believe that I have served the association enthusiastically and without bias. Thanks to my home club and friends for the unconditional support, understanding, great dialogue (proper name for arguments) and to the association for allowing me to serve. It has been a great ride!

Treasurer – Susan Keogh

The obvious and daily dissemination of information on the weakness of the domestic and global economy presents challenges and philosophical questions for the creation of the 2010 budget and for prudent financial management of U.S. Figure Skating's resources. Next year (2010) marks the year of the Olympic Winter Games, which has traditionally boosted membership and sponsorship. However, given the dismal economic climate and daily changes in fortunes, the history of the past can no longer be used solely as a predictor of the future.

U.S. Figure Skating is in as strong a position as it can be given the numerous economic variables and unknowns. Revenue resources are being sought out and expenses are carefully controlled. The organization has a well-managed endowment and a cash reserve which was established several years ago in anticipation of the revenue void from the end of the ABC contract.

While opportunities for sponsorship are encouraging, the current television contract with NBC will conclude in 2010, and negotiations for a new contract will begin, once more calling into question the future certainty of revenue streams. After a four year program of fee increases, there are no plans to increase fees for our regular membership category in the 2010 budget.

Before the September 2008 market decline, The U.S. Figure Skating Foundation stood at over \$60 million. By year end, the Foundation, even with careful and astute management, lost over 20% of its value. Currently, we hold approximately \$8 million in available cash reserves to assist in cash flow management. Given our budget and cash flow projections, and absent increased revenue, the reserve funds will most likely carry U.S. Figure Skating to the 2012 budget cycle and, after that point, the Foundation may be called upon to assist with funding any operating deficit. Please note that the 2009 budget included a grant from the Foundation for \$350,000 to assist with the start up of the development department, and the 2010 budget includes a request to continue funding of this area.

I believe this recent financial history is important in considering the 2010 budget and the future. At the 2008 Governing Council, a budget of \$13.7 million was presented and approved by the Governing Council for 2009. Included in this number was projected potential funding from the USOC for projects of approximately \$1.4 million and at the time of the budget ratification, the Governing Council was assured that only projects that received funding from the USOC would remain in the budget. Ultimately, the USOC provided \$1.1 million in funding and the budget was adjusted accordingly.

As the year has progressed, the 2009 budget has been additionally amended to reflect changes in the economic conditions and the amendments have included reductions in both revenue and expense categories. With the board-approved amendments to the 2009 budget, the budget stands at projected revenue of \$11.7 million and expenses of \$12.4 million or an operational deficit of \$700,000.

As you can see from the numbers, our organization is not currently self-supporting on an annual basis. For fiscal year 2008, U.S. Figure Skating reported a loss of \$2.1 million and, as noted, the loss for 2009 is anticipated to be \$700,000. The difference between revenue and expense as budgeted for 2010 is a deficit of \$500,000.

As you consider and review the 2010 budget, please keep in mind that the average operating expense for the Association is \$11.5 million (without USOC funding/programs). Without increased revenue or major changes to programs or infrastructure, the Association needs to plan for this amount on an annual basis.

2010 Budget Overview

The budget as presented stands as follows:

- OPERATING REVENUE: \$12 million*
- OPERATING EXPENSE: \$12.5 million
- BUDGET SHORTFALL: \$500,000
- FUNDING TO ACHIEVE ZERO BALANCE BUDGET: \$500,000 from U.S. Figure Skating cash reserves

* Anticipated USOC Program Funding represents \$1 million.

2010 Budget Timeline/Process:

The construction of the 2010 budget was based on the following timeline:

- November 2008 Templates and budget information distributed to committee chairs, group coordinators and finance liaisons
- December 6, 2008 Initial budget submissions received by Headquarters
- January/February 2009 Final review of budgets by group coordinators, Finance Committee liaisons, committee chairs, Headquarters staff and treasurer with mandate to attempt to trim budget expense by 10% where possible.
- February 22, 2009 Complete budget review by the Board of Directors
- March 10, 2009 Ratification of 2010 budget by the board

There is no doubt that this is a troubling time in our economy and that there is great uncertainty as to the whether the proposed solutions will repair and regenerate the economy. As an association, we are primed to utilize fiscal conservatism and to preserve financial integrity so that we may continue to promote to the best of our ability the mission of U.S. Figure Skating as defined by our bylaws and strategic plan.

ISU Representative – Gale Tanger

As of this writing, the 2009 ISU World Figure Skating Championships in Los Angeles are in final preparations. These championships will determine the number of athletes we will be permitted to send to the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. All competitors must be U.S. citizens in order to be qualified to complete on the United States Olympic Team at the 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver, Canada.

The Vancouver Organizing Committee recently hosted the pre-Olympic event, the 2009 ISU Four Continents Championships. We took this opportunity to familiarize ourselves with the venue, prospective village, and surrounding areas in preparation for the upcoming Olympic Games.

In May, David Raith and I will attend the meeting of the Grand Prix Commission for the selection of athletes for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series this upcoming season. It is an important season leading up to the Olympic Games, and we will try to position our athletes at competitions that can best showcase their talent, as well as prepare them for the season. Lorrie Parker and the International Committee are working hard to assist and monitor athletes to be sure they are ready for this important year, as well as continue to develop new talent.

The United States has had a strong showing at a number of ISU events this season. Our attendance and performances at the Grand Prix events – both junior and senior – continues to be strong. With a good showing at the newly combined Grand Prix Final, our talented skaters continued to bring home medals from all events. The years of hard work and dedication from this entire association are to be commended.

In preparation of the 2010 ISU Congress, we will be looking at potential proposals to improve the present system of competitive skating and work to create the interest and flexibility needed for our skaters. To insure future success, we need to continue to identify new talent, produce the pipeline of development and run the thousands of events that keep our athletes committed and involved.

I continued to be honored to serve U.S. Figure Skating in the capacity of ISU Representative.

United States Olympic Committee Representative – Charles Cyr

It was a year filled with much excitement as the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) fielded a wonderful team representing the U.S. at the Olympic Summer Games in Beijing, China. “Amazing Awaits” was truly the slogan that brought U.S. athletes to the forefront of the Games. The Olympic movement is still gaining momentum as we head to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) decision for the bid in 2016 which could be awarded to Chicago, Ill.

This year, I had the distinct pleasure and honor of representing U.S. Figure Skating at the induction ceremony for three members of the U.S. Figure Skating family into the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame. Carol Heiss Jenkins, Brian Boitano and Carlo Fassi were honored and memorialized as part of U.S. Olympic history. The black tie affair, held in Chicago, was well attended, and the figure skating community was extremely well represented.

With the continued efforts of our Executive Director David Raith, and our Senior Director of Athlete High Performance Mitch Moyer, U.S. Figure Skating continues to have funds being earmarked for enhancement, development, and training for our Olympic hopefuls.

There have been many changes within the USOC in both their governance and leadership. With the current resignation of their Chief Executive Officer Jim Scherr, the USOC assures each national governing body (NGB) that its leadership is still strong and will continue to be on the cutting edge of sports management leading the U.S. as a frontrunner in the Olympic movement.

We continue to get ready for 2010 in hopes that this Olympic Winter Games on North American soil will again prove to be prosperous for US Figure Skating.

It has been an honor to represent U.S. Figure Skating as a major NGB within the USOC.

Other Reports

2009 Board of Directors and Governing Council Meetings

May 2009

Professional Skaters Association (PSA) – James Santee

Summary of Activities:

Membership in the Professional Skaters Association (PSA) exceeded the 2008 total by more than one hundred coaches, and is fast approaching the all time high of 6300. The PSA liability insurance program saw an increase of 8% over last year, and we are now offering health and dental insurance in all states except Massachusetts, where they have a government supported program.

Since the launching of the continuing education requirement (CER) program last July, close to 100 coaches are currently compliant with 372 enrolled in category A and 157 in category B. The e-learning platform has been working to specifications and since March 1, 2008, a total 1758 courses have been registered for. At the time of this report being authored, an additional 12 CER courses are in final review, to be added to the current CER syllabus. These new courses are discipline-specific and are 200 and 300 level courses. By July 1, we should have another 12 courses; bringing the CER syllabus to a total of 28 courses.

On February 1, Heidi Thibert was hired by the PSA as our e-curriculum coordinator. In close cooperation with Mitch Moyer, Mary-Elizabeth Wightman, and Jackie Brenner, Heidi will manage the platform operations, curriculum development, and quality control of the exams.

On March 10, 2009, PSA entered into an agreement with the Ice Skating Institute (ISI) regarding the training of their professional members. In addition, ISI is formally recognizing the coaching sanctions of ISI and/or PSA members by the PSA and will bar sanctioned coaches from their events.

Also at the PSA fall meeting, the PSA Board of Governors voted to add a basic membership to the bylaws. The Basic membership is for learn-to-skate staff who do not provide private or semi-private ice skating instruction. Basic members cannot vote, purchase liability insurance, hold elective office, or apply for and obtain any additional ratings.

The PSA looks forward to this next year as we continue to develop joint programs and to improve upon those that are already offered.

Upcoming Events:

- 2009 Conference
 - May 21-23, 2009
 - Orlando, Fla.
 - The Hilton at Disney World and RDV Arenas
- 2010 Conference
 - May 20-22, 2010
 - Colorado Springs, Colo.
 - The Crowne Plaza and the World Arena

Serving the American Rinks (STAR) – Joe Delich

As STAR enters its ninth year in existence, we remain committed as ever to our initial charter to be “*the premier national organization designed to foster the development, growth and success of ice skating rinks in the United States.*” In pursuing our mission, STAR is well positioned to positively impact and support the goals and objectives of our partners at U.S. Figure Skating. As STAR’s footprint across the United States rink industry expands, we are confident that so too will the positive impact we have on U.S. Figure Skating goals and objectives in the following areas:

- ★ STAR continues to influence rink owners and operators across the country on the value of investing in education, training and certification programs along with various other STAR resources and programs. The net

effect is that more and more facilities are being managed and maintained with STAR trained and certified personnel capable of **providing safe, clean, well-run facilities for U.S. Figure Skating to operate its programs.**

★ STAR is working to strengthen its own brand awareness and continue to build its recognition, respect and trust across all facets of the rink industry. As our sphere of influence widens, U.S. Figure Skating will be a direct beneficiary of STAR's efforts to **advocate and promote U.S. Figure Skating programs and resources to the rink industry.**

★ STAR has undertaken several initiatives to build upon and strengthen both its direct and indirect support to U.S. Figure Skating. Our efforts fully recognize U.S. Figure Skating as a key stakeholder in STAR and underscore the sincere appreciation and acknowledgement of the support provided to STAR by the national governing bodies (NGBs). It is with this mindset that we strive to find ways to continually improve upon the support we provide to our partners at U.S. Figure Skating.

★ A concerted effort is underway to better educate end-users about STAR's efforts within the rink industry and the programs and resources that are available to all members of U.S. Figure Skating. Beginning with the January 2009 issue, all figure skating directors across the country began receiving a courtesy copy of RINK Magazine, our industry's most widely read and circulated publication. RINK will help key principals in the skating community stay abreast of current trends and issues in the rink industry as well as provide an excellent communication medium for the skating community to get its message and content out to the rinks. We at STAR view RINK Magazine as the proverbial "foot in the door" for us to begin building greater lines of communication and cooperation with this key end-user group.

★ STAR is leading the development of a collaborative marketing piece with U.S. Figure Skating and USA Hockey that will lay out the programs, resources and synergies of the three organizations and how ice rinks can directly benefit and build competitive advantages by incorporating these programs and resources into their operations. We anticipate this material being ready for distribution in the summer.

★ STAR continues to actively participate in U.S. Figure Skating's Club Education program. While not a new initiative, this particular program is noteworthy because it has shown itself to be one of the most effective means for STAR to reach out to the skating community and deliver its message. We consider it a "best practice" program and are working on ways we can exploit this format to reach out to a greater cross-section of the skating community.

★ StarRinks.com is the "front door to our business". It is a primary means of communication for STAR to interface with our stakeholders. And while we have enjoyed great economies of scale hosting this site on the USA Hockey web domain, the downside has been a STAR web site that is heavily weighted with USA Hockey content due to technical limitations of the shared infrastructure. With a minimal targeted investment, we have managed to roll out a new look to our web site that better brands STAR, removes the heavy USA Hockey content and provides greater flexibility for STAR to manage the overall content and appearance of the site. These changes allow us to treat both our partner NGBs equitably including the ability to strategically place U.S. Figure Skating links and content prominently on the StarRinks.com site.

★ STAR is working with the U.S. Figure Skating events staff to better refine arena and ice requirements and issues for the major event/competition bidding process. Through this cooperative effort, STAR is incorporating its rink expertise on the front end in the bid application language as well as on the backside in the evaluation of proposals to identify potential rink issues prior to awarding a contract. Along these same lines, STAR will be hosting a seminar at Governing Council where among other things we will partner with U.S. Figure Skating events staff to discuss arena and ice issues/considerations for clubs who are planning smaller scale local events and competitions.

STAR has undergone several key personnel changes over the past year. John Beadle, STAR's president since inception, stepped down from the STAR board after providing eight years of strong leadership and vision. STAR Executive Board member, Larry Reid, was unanimously voted in as the new president. Pat Kelleher, STAR's first and only chief operating officer (COO), took a new position at USA Hockey. Pat's efforts left an indelible impact on STAR that will be felt for years to come. STAR's new COO is Joe Delich. A 20-year Air Force officer, Joe also has an extensive background in coaching, education and sports management. Don Moffatt transitioned from STAR to

take a position as facilities operations supervisor with the NHL. Don will continue his relationship with STAR as an adjunct instructor. John, Pat and Don all remain strong and influential advocates for STAR and the NGBs. Cory Portner was promoted internally to the position of director of membership development and assumed additional instructor duties.

STAR remains the preeminent professional trade organization in the rink industry. Yet with that, we recognize there are still substantial “targets of opportunity” for STAR to continue growing and thereby increasing our presence and influence within the rink industry. We are committed as ever to working closely with U.S. Figure Skating principals to find new ways to provide value-added resources and services that will help facilitate mutually beneficial goals and objectives for both organizations.

The following people currently serve on the STAR Board of Directors, providing their guidance and leadership as representatives of U.S. Figure Skating: Steve Cady, Bill Fauver, Bill Howard, Mike Meyer and Ann O’Keefe.

Ice Skating Institute (ISI) – David Santee

The Ice Skating Institute (ISI) celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. Among the special events planned are the 50th anniversary competition to be held in Orlando, Fla., May 23-24, between the PSA and ISI Conferences. Both of these conferences will be held at the Hilton at Disney. Paul Wylie will be one of the featured speakers.

The 2008 World Recreational Team Championships was held at the South Suburban Ice Arena and the South Suburban Family Sports Center in Centennial, Colo. Thanks to Gerry Lane’s leadership, the competition was a tremendous success with almost 1,800 skaters participating. This year’s World Recreational Championships will be held in San Jose, Calif., from July 27 to August 1.

ISI’s Ice Arena Institute of Management (iAIM) education program will offer a seminar in Chicago in August that will feature courses in operations, management, and programming.

ISI has noticed an increase in public skating around the country since the beginning of the year. With the economic climate the way it is, fewer families are travelling, therefore more are looking for affordable entertainment at home. Along those lines, competitions have also seen an upswing in numbers. The competition that I run in my home rink had 55 more individual skaters this year and six more synchronized teams.

Like everybody else, ISI continues to look at ways to operate efficiently. On March 16, ISI and PSA signed a joint agreement in Chicago to work together on developing education, training, and certification. Since PSA already has an agreement with U.S. Figure Skating, there is a greater chance than ever of all organizations being uniform in regard to education. The agreement was signed in Chicago because the ISI was formed in Chicago in 1959.