

# ROCK TALK



Newsletter of the London Curling Club

November 2015

## Jennifer Jones visits junior curlers competing at LCC

Thirty-two junior teams converged on three local curling clubs early this month for a three-day bonspiel that would sharpen their skills. But the young women from the group that competed at the LCC on Nov. 7 had a surprise bonus.

It was lesson on dealing with life's challenges, supporting teammates and preparing for a career when they had played their last competitive game. It was delivered by Jennifer Jones, the skip of Canada's gold-medal champions at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Russia.

Jones told them she had slipped and fallen, tearing her ACL, a year before the Olympics. At the same time, she was pregnant with her first child. Worried about her knee, she went to a physiotherapist and her doctor for advice. She was told to do "nothing more or nothing less than what they told me to do. I did everything they said. You surround yourself with experts."

She was able to resume curling much earlier than expected. She was back on the ice by the end of August, instead of the end of November. "My team believes in me and everyone around us believes in us."

That attitude also comes into play on the ice. She urged the young curlers to be positive with their teammates and support them, especially when they have missed a shot and may feel they have let their teammates down. "Encourage them. They are trying their very best. We will pick each other up when we we're down. Be a cheerleader out there."

On the Jones rink, teammates have each other's backs. "It allows us to focus and make the biggest shot of our lives.

"The pressure to bring home the gold medal didn't matter to us. We were going to win as a team or lose as a team, no matter what the media said or anyone back home said."

She concluded by urging the young curlers to prepare themselves for the work force so they would have a career. Success in curling and her work as a lawyer gave her self esteem, Jones said.

She was in London for a fundraiser for the London Health Sciences Foundation. New LCC member Robin Warren was instrumental in getting Jones to visit the LCC. The two women had known each other via their work with National Bank Financial.



Jennifer Jones visits the Ontario Junior Curling Tour event at the LCC on Nov. 7, taking time to pose with LCC President Paul Pergau, young curlers and fans.

The Thames Valley Junior Bonspiel is an event on the Ontario Junior Curling Tour that involved 97 games at three clubs – London, St. Thomas and Ilderton.

Coached by John Rudd, skip Russell Cuddie's LCC rink of Jonah Mondloch, Kenny Malcolmson and Matt Allan won their first three games. But they lost the A final, B semi-final and C semi-final and were eliminated. After a great first day they found them selves on the "wrong side of the inch" the next day in St. Thomas.

The LCC junior women's representative consists of players who go to four different universities, as do the four boys. Coached by Jennifer Cuddie, the rink consists of skip Kirsten Marshall, Emily Lloyd, Jennifer Wale and Nicole Titkai. They won their first game, lost the second, won the third, but lost the B and C finals. London native Joanna Francolini played third on an Orangeville rink that finished as an event semi-finalist.

The winner of the men's division was Team Mooibroek of Galt Golf and Country Club, while Team Armstrong of the KW Granite Club was junior women's champion.

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## Early indications show LCC is maintaining its membership

Here we are into November and curling is well underway. We don't have the final tally yet but it looks like our overall membership is about the same this year as it was last year, which is pretty good all things considered. All of our 27 league convenors are in place and have their respective leagues up and running. What a wonderful job our convenors do. We can't thank them enough.

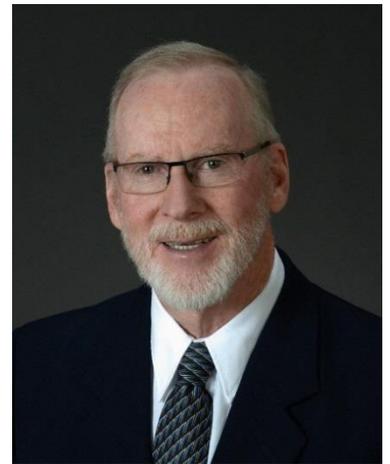
The ice is terrific again this year, thanks to Kevin Breivik and his team of ice technicians. Your support of our Pro Shoppe has been excellent. Keep those sales coming.

Dave Weber has been analysing the use of our new boot cleaners located at each entrance to the ice surface. At our last board meeting Dave showed us just how much debris these boot cleaners have collected. It's rather amazing and gratifying knowing that we have saved that much stuff from getting onto the ice. We're hoping that all of us continue to faithfully clean our boots before we step onto the ice. This has played a role in achieving our great ice conditions. Keep it up!

In our quest to promote curling amongst the youth in the London area, we, along with our curling partners in St. Thomas and Ilderton, played host to an Ontario Junior Curling Tour stop this year (Nov. 6-8). We appreciate your support in allowing us to work this into our busy curling schedule. We are also playing host to the provincial bantam and junior mixed finals at our club again this season in April, 2016. These events, along with our active Little Rocks, bantam and junior leagues, elementary school clinics and the Thames Valley high school league, show just how much the LCC is a key player in getting youth into curling. Hopefully, they will continue to curl for years to come.

Our new web site is looking good and working well. Be sure to reference it often for anything you need to know about curling at our club. In addition to league, draw and schedule information there is a well-stocked list of spares in case you need to find a fill-in. The current and all past issues of Rock Talk are there and in living colour. Burt Dowsett, our editor, has presented some interesting articles for your reading pleasure. Be sure to read them on your technology of choice.

*Paul Pergau, LCC President*



The London Curling Club's board of directors for 2015-16, are, from L to R: Bruce Turner (treasurer), Roger Moyer (member services), John Crosby (past president), Dave Weber (property, maintenance/planning), Don Agnew (advertising), Fay Weiler (secretary), Paul Pergau (president), Dave Rush (vice-president), Marjorie Dudley (promotion) and Bruce Thom (leagues and OCA). Pat Boothe (skills and development) was unavailable for the photograph.



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## Marriage, curling and lasting friendships

Ken Buchan has competed in three Briers but an equally treasured memory is skipping Ontario's mixed rink in the 1981 Canadian championships.

That was special for him because his wife, Deanne, was his third. "To do something at that level with your spouse I found it pretty exhilarating. The other part of that is the two other players (former LCC members Tom and Penny Brown) were married as well."

Ken, who has been an LCC member since 1968, says the two couples had competed together before so the marriage bond was a strength on the ice for them. Conversely, they played against a few other couples whose game deteriorated into dissension when things did not go well.

"We stayed together as a team for four more years and went back to the provincials three of those four years. We got close but no cigar. We decided we had done it long enough."

Deanne Buchan liked the mixed team competition. "It was great. I learned more about curling in those five years than ever before."

Deanne says the fact she and Ken had competed at a national level before forming their mixed team was an advantage. "We knew what was required." Deanne had competed in the Canadian women's final in 1975 (then called the Lassie) in Moncton, throwing lead rocks for Bea Cole's Ivanhoe rink.

"We were both competing at that time and I was starting to skip about then. Penny and I played together competitively."

The Buchans are one of three couples asked to talk about their experiences in curling together.

Ken and Jean Walmsley, whose LCC membership dates back to the 1967-68 curling season, found that mixed curling led to friendships with other couples that have lasted decades.

Ken's friend, Garry Cruickshank, was convening the mixed league at the club and put the Walmsleys with Jim and Deanne Fitzpatrick. "Deanne had never curled before until we were put together. We won the mixed that year. We have been friends ever since." Later, they curled in mixed with the Cruickshanks.

See **COUPLES AND CURLING** Page 6



For Ken and Deanne Buchan, a major highlight of their time together at the LCC was representing Ontario in the Canadian mixed curling championships in 1981.



Mixed curling with several couples over the years provided Ken and Jean Walmsley not only teammates but lasting friendships.



Don and Karen Lowry enjoyed mixed curling, particularly the Friday night variety that includes a potluck dinner. Saturday night fun night was also a favourite.

## Sifton Classic will experience modest growth in entries

The 32nd annual Sifton Classic scheduled for Dec. 1-2 will be marginally larger this year. At a time when two-day bonspiels are difficult to fill, convenor Gord Sellery reports that this year's event will have at least 22 entries, up from 20 the year before. He added that if one more out-of-club team enters, he can get four LCC members to curl, making an even 24 teams.

Cost of entry is \$260 per team, or \$65 a person. There is a banquet for the teams at the Mocha Shrine Club on Dec. 1, with the reception at 6 p.m. and dinner at 7. Each curler on the top three teams in both divisions wins a turkey.

## Learning to curl on the ice and ‘on the warm side of the glass’

Dan Neeb brings his enthusiasm, expertise and perspective to his role as chief instructor at the LCC’s Learn to Curl program. “I just like to introduce people to the game,” he says before stepping onto the ice to teach.

Of course, he goes much further than that. He teaches the fundamentals of curling so they can enjoy the sport. “If they want to get better, we’ll give them the tools. But one of the main reasons (people take up curling) is social connections and to have fun. It’s also about what happens on the warm side of the glass. It’s not just the wins and losses.”

It is a sport that many couples do together, but Neeb and his wife, Melissa, take it a step beyond. They are both certified coaches. Melissa knew a lot about curling before she had thrown a rock. She gained a good start on her knowledge of strategy by watching the game on television.

In the past a lot of people coming out to Learn to Curl were individuals. Now, there are a lot more couples and groups of friends. “That helps foster the social part of after the game. They have existing friendships and then they talk to other curlers,” says Dan. The social circle is growing.

This was corroborated by a couple of new curlers at a recent Learn to Curl session at the LCC. Sue Regan pointed to a group of her friends who were golfers but decided they wanted a winter sport. Sue wasn’t a golfer but came with them for curling. Similarly, Andrea Harper was there because she and her husband “wanted a nice winter sport.”

LCC club coaches start a new curler with two rocks instead of one rock and a broom. It helps a beginner with stability, Dan says. “Then they push out but not hard. It gives them an idea of what the slide feels like.” The next step is a little harder push out, and that is followed by the broom and one rock. This begins with no kick, just an extension of the leg. Finally, there’s the delivery, with the rock back, the sliding foot back and then the rock and sliding foot forward.

Neeb believes the most difficult aspect of the game for new curlers is achieving balance. It is also problem that can cause missed shots.

See **LEARN TO CURL** Page 6



Dan Neeb instructs new curler Andrea Harper as she prepare to throw. At right, Dan’s wife, Melissa, holds the broom in the house for a beginning curler.

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## Prostate cancer fundraiser's encore features two bonspiels

Buoyed by the success of its initial fund-raising project to fight prostate cancer, Ken Walmsley's committee is following up with two bonspiels in January.

The first bonspiel, scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 16, is targeted at men who curl in night-time leagues. There will be two eight-end games. The entry fee is \$50 per person. Team entries will be accepted.

The second bonspiel will be on Wednesday, Jan. 20. It will feature two six-end games. This event will consist of mainly senior men's curlers. It will accept team or individual entries. The fee is \$50.

Both events are at the London Curling Club. Lunch will be provided and curlers will have a chance to participate in the silent auction. Entries should be submitted to Bob Hyatt by Dec. 15.

As in the inaugural bonspiel last March, a silent auction will be a major source of revenue generated by the LCC for the London Health Sciences Foundation. There is almost \$9,000 in items already donated for the silent auction. The committee is trying to have all silent auction donations in hand by Nov. 20. The silent auction will begin on Jan. 10.

So far, six different sponsors have contributed a total of about \$6,500. After raising \$18,500 for prostate cancer research last year, the committee has boosted its target to \$25,000. Yet, funding research is the second most important goal. "Raising awareness (of prostate cancer) is No. 1," says Walmsley.

*Burt Dowsett*

## Ontario Volunteer Service Awards honour LCC helpers

At the end of the 2014-15 season we were pleased to have the opportunity to present our candidates for the Ontario Volunteer Service Awards. Through this award the club is able to recognize volunteers who contribute meaningful volunteer time on an ongoing basis in various club areas.

At a Ministry of Citizenship ceremony in April recipients were presented with stylized trillium pins and personalized certificates, followed by delicious refreshments.

Our candidates were: Marnie Dickout, Gwen Crossman, Wendy Foster, Peter Askey, Tony Francolini and Gord Sellery.

Many thanks to these members for their commitment & contribution!

*Fay Weiler*

## WDS opens the season with 12 new members

With 12 new members and three others returning, the Women's Daytime Section launched its 2015-16 season with a total of 90 members. This includes five in the social category.

The WDS opening general meeting on Oct. 7 was preceded by a social hour. The executive committee includes Pam Harrison (chair), Marnie Dickout, (past chair), Isabel Lynch (vice-chair), Jeanette Walker (secretary), Jinx Findlay (games coordinator), Sherry Chambers (assistant games coordinator), Katie Ungar (photographer/historian), Sandra Fox (assistant photographer/historian), Karen Shearer (trophy co-ordinator), as well as Linda Peeling, Darlene ten Haaf and Lise Tranmer on the games committee, and Joan Cuthbert, Jean Cameron and Shirley Vaile serving on the advisory committee.

Curlers were welcomed by club President Paul Pergau, who thanked the WDS for their contributions toward club operations. He also thanked Shirley Griffeth for her donation of one toilet and the WDS for their donation of a second toilet for the upstairs washroom. Club manager Greg Lewis provided an update on changes made within the club.

Opening jitneys were held on Oct. 8 and 13. The competitive league began on Oct. 16, convened by Pat Bell and Jan Murray. The Young's Jewellers-sponsored event started on Oct. 20, convened by Marilyn Brown and Joan Bancroft. The Caryl Baker Visage event, convened by Penny Brown and Lynda Reesor, began on Oct. 20.

Jinx Findlay will convene an open bonspiel on Nov. 19. The Goldline-sponsored event will start on Dec. 8. The Marshall's Pasta Mill event begins on Dec. 10.

*Isabel Lynch, WDS Vice Chair*

## LCC rinks eliminated from Traveller's event

Dave Beckett's London Curling Club rink was eliminated from the Travelers Championship after splitting four games. The Beckett rink beat David St. Louis of Stratford, 12-3, and then lost to Matt Ignor of St. Mary's, 7-1. They then beat Ryan Donais of Golden Acres 5-1, before losing to Joel Moore of Highland, 7-4. The eventual winner on the men's side was Mark Patterson of Chatham.

On the women's side, Miolyka Steele's LCC rink lost to Susan Cunningham of Paris, 8-5, and then to Paula Seggewiss of Woodstock, 8-3, eliminating them. The eventual winner of Zone 15 & 16 was Ruth Alexander of Highland. The event was held in St. Mary's and Woodstock.

*Bruce Thom, Leagues and OCA*

## ***LEARN TO CURL: Research shows clubs need to be safe, inclusive***

Safety measures on the ice are also taught in Learn to Curl. Its importance was underlined by a recent face plant onto the ice by Newfoundland skip Brad Gushue, the 2006 Olympic curling champion. At Learn to Curl most people start with running shoes and a slip-on slider when they deliver a rock. "We tell them to get the slider off before they stand up. We teach two-gripper brushing. We always sweep without the slider."

Once they have curling shoes, they are told never to step onto the ice with their slider first. Similarly, stepping onto the ice over curling stones should be avoided. Also, don't step backwards because there might be a stone there, resulting in a fall.

Curling Canada's website reported recently on the research of Simon Barrick for his master's degree at the University of Waterloo. In examining adult Learn to Curl leagues, Barrick, a competitive curler and coach, suggested that these leagues need to be safe, inclusive and "support the transition into more experienced leagues upon graduation." The LCC is already ahead of the curve on the latter. The Tuesday night mixed league that Connie Weir introduced three years ago to provide new curlers a bridge from Learn to Curl to more competitive leagues is alive and thriving.

*Burt Dowsett*

## ***COUPLES AND CURLING: A family sport included next generation***

Ken and Jean also watch curling together. "Curling is a big part of our lives." Jean says when she and Ken came to London they were just out of university and didn't know anyone. Curling was the easiest and least expensive sport.

"It was a common interest. We would curl with others and then come together about our experience. When our children were in Grade 6 Ken and I managed the junior program together. It became a family thing." Their daughter would go on to win the city high school B side women's championship.

The Walmsleys have been active volunteers both within the club but also in curling events such as the 1981 world championships in London, where they ran an after-game dinner for the curlers. They always helped each other in their volunteer duties. Ken's current project is a fundraiser to combat prostate cancer.

Don and Karen Lowry curled at the Ivanhoe and at one point curled in the old arena at Western Fair, before joining the LCC in 1977.

They started with mixed curling at the LCC with Ted and Rosie Smith as teammates. Later they would curl with Dick and Mary German, then with Bill and Joan Cuthbert and finally with Gary and Bonny Shawyer

"Ted Smith skipped, Dick German skipped, Bill Cuthbert skipped and then I started to skip," says Don.

Like most mixed curlers, Don and Karen also curled in men's and women's leagues respectively. Don had curled in the Miller and Sweeney leagues but now he is strictly a daytime curler. "I enjoy curling with everybody. I'm out there for a good time."

The linchpin that helped Karen get started in curling was a service that is rare in curling clubs today. When their children were young, Karen said the Ivanhoe had a baby-sitting service that enabled her to get out of the house and curl.

"Our kids both curled here for a while," says Karen. The Lowrys' daughter, Robin, was lead on a rink that won the provincials in junior and went to the 1989 nationals in Winnipeg. Other members of that team were skip Tara Stevenson, third Christy (Buchan) Robinson (the Buchans' daughter) and second Melanie Leatham.

Over the years, among the Lowrys' favourite activities at the LCC were the Friday night mixed curling potluck suppers, as well as the now gone Saturday fun nights. Whoever showed up curled.

For Karen Lowry, curling is about "doing things together," as well as the social aspect of the sport. "We know a lot of people. We've been here for a long time."

*Burt Dowsett*

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## Member/guest night offers chance to let friends try curling

Many of our members have asked “Is there any way that my friends can try curling?” With a full schedule of leagues it is difficult to accommodate this type of request, but this year we found an opening in the calendar and are excited to offer something new.

On the last Friday of each month we will hold a “member/guest night.” The first event is set for Nov. 27. There will be a sign-up sheet in the lounge with slots for 48 names making up 12 teams on six sheets. Choose who you want to play against if you like. Guests must be signed up by a member and play on the same sheet as that member. From 7:45 to 8 p.m. members can provide instruction, if necessary. A regular eight-end game will be played from 8 to 10 p.m. The member must ensure their guests follow proper curling etiquette, as well as our guidelines for clean ice.

This event will be free to members. Guests will pay \$20 (tax included). Members are responsible for collecting this fee from their guests and giving it to the bartender prior to the start of the game. Other planned dates are Dec. 18, Jan. 29, Feb. 26 and March 18.

Bring out a small group of friends and they can try curling, check out our facility, have fun and maybe few drinks. Hopefully some of them will become future members.

*Greg Lewis, LCC manager*

## Bonspiel honours Jeanettes in Hetherington’s family

Jeanette is the middle name of five generations of women in Joyce Hetherington’s family, of which Joyce is the third generation. She has sponsored the WDS Jeanettes Early Bird bonspiel for the last 13 years.

The youngest, Grace Jeanette, is 10 and her aunt Heather Jeanette is Joyce’s niece. Heather’s grandmother, also Joyce’s mom, is Rosemary Jeanette, who died three years ago at the age of 97. Her mother, Evangeline Jeanette, saw the 19th century end and as a farmer’s daughter welcomed in the 20th.

Joyce’s mother was one of many of her generation who made the transition from rural to urban Canada. Although she was born in a Saskatchewan farmhouse, she lived most of her life in a city, close to church, community and her beloved curling/lawn bowling clubs.

Joyce named the Early Bird Bonspiel in honour of the Jeanettes, their strength, courage, love of fair play and commitment to family and community. Joyce Jeanette, we thank you for sponsoring this event and honour you for sharing your focus on your family, continuity and connection with your curling family.

Out-of-club teams from Aylmer, Highland, Ilderton, Ingersoll and Tillsonburg, as well six in-club teams participated in the “Jeanettes” bonspiel on Nov. 4. The theme was “the Rising Sun.” The first-place team and trophy winner was the rink of Judy Oryniak, Darlene Pfaff, Gail McMahon and Becky Ostrom, from Ilderton. Tina Vanderwallen Howey’s team of Ferne Taggart, Diane Burgess and Sandy Buchner from Tillsonburg placed second. Finishing third was the Highland rink of Ruth Alexander, Sue Aubin, Gayle George and Carolyn May. The LCC team of Marj Dudley, Valerie Clark, Sherry Chambers and Sue Lundy was fourth. Draws were made for the floral table centrepieces, as well as a pair of curling gloves donated by Greg Lewis. Thanks to co-convenor Liz Oehm, drawmaster Fay Weiler and assistant Karen Shearer, as well as Jan Murray, Sandy Ronson, Jeanette Walker and Leslie Smith for their assistance. Special thanks to Greg Lewis, Barb Colbourn, Les Sonier, Kristen Venner and the ice assistants.

*Pam Harrison, WDS Chair*

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Life's brighter under the sun

## WDS salutes Mardi McLachlan for her Spirit of Curling award

Mardi McLachlan, recipient of the women's Spirit of Curling award, was out of the country at the time of the Annual General Meeting, so she was unable to attend the presentation. Mardi epitomizes the essence of this award. She made a major contribution to the WDS program, where she so ably carried out the tasks of both member and chair of the games committee for several years. Mardi is a dedicated curler who works to improve her skills and has reached the level of skip. However, she prefers to play other positions where there is more opportunity to enjoy interacting with fellow curlers and to sweep. She is always pleasant and positive in her encouragement of fellow curlers and is always ready to help whenever needed. Her ever-present smile brings pleasure to all.

The WDS wanted to show their appreciation directly and arranged for Paul Pergau, club president to present the trophy to Mardi on Oct. 16. At the same time, Chair Pam Harrison presented a bouquet to Mardi on behalf of all WDS members.

*Pam Harrison, WDS Chair*



The WDS invited LCC President Paul Pergau to present the women's Spirit of Curling Award to Mardi McLachlan.

## Fall Card Party attracts 72 women

Seventy-two women attended the WDS Fall Card Party on Oct. 28. It featured lunch and an afternoon of playing cards. Several former curlers were present, as well as many friends of club members. Thanks to a generous group of our members who donated sandwiches, veggies, squares and grapes for lunch and 27 gifts for prizes. Thanks also to the many women who set the tables, served the food and did the dishes.

Special thanks to Jean Walmsley for her help, as well as to Sue Ferguson, who was a great co-convenor and did most of the decorating with Darlene ten Haaf's help. Thanks to our chair, Pam Harrison, for her assistance. We enjoyed many compliments and made a profit of \$705 for the WDS.

*Joan Bancroft, convenor*



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