

ROCK TALK



Newsletter of the London Curling Club

December 2015

Olympics, Brier, Hearts make Dave Rush a busy volunteer

Dave Rush's passion for volunteering started on the water but played out on a much grander scale on the ice. It would reach its apex at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, where he was assigned to curling.

Rush, who is vice-president of the London Curling Club, was introduced to volunteering in the 1960s at a Thames Valley Children's Centre fundraiser known as the Bunny Bundle. It was started by one of Dave's friends, a marathon canoe racer who worked at the children's centre. "He wanted to do a fundraiser so he organized a canoe race. After the first year it was so big he couldn't handle it." Rush and others took it over and ran it for 13 years. They were so good on timing and organization that they went to Ontario Summer Games in Kitchener and Peterborough, where they officiated at the marathon canoe events.

There was a lag after that until he volunteered at the 1996 men's world curling championships in Hamilton. A friend of Rush's through work was the manager of Emco in Burlington and one of the organizers of the event. "He took on me and a friend of us both. We worked together in the bar. That was my first one in curling.

"Then I realized I was going to be retired when the 2010 Olympics came along. I thought I will do whatever I can to get a volunteer position. When I found out it was in Vancouver I knew it would work for me." The Olympics is a three-week commitment for volunteers, who have to pick up the tab for their travel and lodging. Dave's brother lives in Vancouver so housing was not an issue for him.

"I went online at the appropriate time and did all the tutorials. There's quite an extensive training for it. A relative's husband was a vice-president of Vanoc, the Vancouver organizing committee. I contacted him and told him what my ambition was," said Rush. He had asked for help in steering him in the right direction.

He didn't hear from Olympic officials until the November before the Olympics, when he was contacted for initial training. Rush happened to be in Vancouver at the time and the training was in Squamish. "I told them I'm available. They signed me up right away. After that I hadn't heard anything."

He booked his flight anyway, thinking flights might not be available if he waited too long. In late November he was offered a position at the Para Olympics, which follow the Olympics. "I told them because of my flight that wouldn't work. I said 'I guess my volunteer dream is over.' Later on the same day they gave me the job as team driver for the German men's curling team.

"After the first training session I started to write a blog. I had never blogged before. I thought this is cool. Every day I would come back and I would have time to write this and post it faithfully every evening. I got a lot of feedback. I wrote it on how things were working on the inside." The blog address is <http://daves2010olympicjourney.blogspot.ca/>

Going into the Olympics, Rush already knew he would be the director of transportation a year later for the 2011 Brier in London. He was determined to learn from the Olympics to help him prepare for his Brier role.

In any job, a thoughtful supervisor can make a big difference in morale. At Vancouver, that person was Neil Houston, event chair for both men and women's Olympic curling. Volunteers were not allowed on site unless they had a pre-arranged shift. "Neil, in his wisdom, made sure all drivers had shifts from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. The teams might have unscheduled events. There's a definite reason for it." But for the team drivers it meant they could see any curling game.

Wanting to learn from the driver Kevin Martin always requested, Rush befriended him. His name is Scott Grant. "Who better to talk to? I asked Scott what I could expect from these guys. He told me I should have a list of good restaurants and sites to visit in Vancouver. There was a lounge and on odd occasions you could mingle with them."

See *DAVE RUSH LIVES HIS DREAM AT THE VANCOUVER OLYMPICS CURLING VENUE*. Page 4



Dave Rush lives his dream at the Vancouver Olympics curling venue.

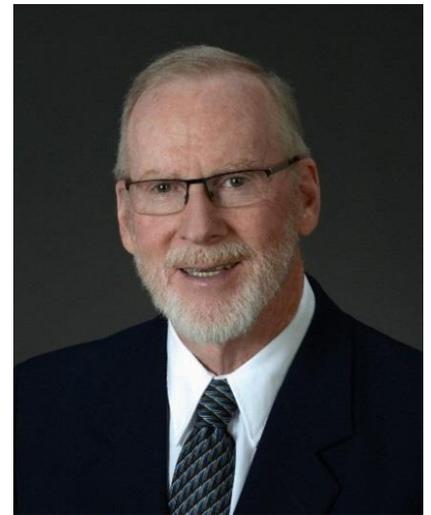
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President's perks include posing with Jennifer Jones



By the time you read this column we will be well into December. Our curling season will pretty much be half over or half remaining, whichever way you want to look at it. I think we've had an excellent season so far but if you disagree and/or have suggestions for the back half, be sure to contact me or any of our Board members. We're all ears.

It is not so bad being your president. I get to talk to groups I wouldn't otherwise, I get to work with our energetic, talented, passionate and dedicated Board, and I get to hand out prizes and trophies for various events. At the Harry Sifton Classic I was part of a group that was piped to the head table and at the Junior Ontario Curling Tour event at our own club I got to meet and have my picture taken with Jennifer Jones. So the bottom line is when it is time to volunteer for a position on the London Curling Club Board of Directors leap at the opportunity. It is not that time consuming but it is certainly rewarding and you can make a difference.

Christmas is almost here. If you still have to buy something for someone, your curling teammates perhaps, visit our Pro Shoppe. Greg has it well stocked and the items are seasonally priced.

On behalf of your Board of Directors I want to take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas/happy holidays. Good curling in 2016. See you on the ice.

Paul Pergau, LCC President

Members may favour on-ice instruction over strategy

The London Curling Club continues to provide coaching at different levels for its members, as well as clinics for beginners who want to try out the sport. The classroom strategy clinic planned for October was cancelled for lack of interest. I think that was because our members really want on-ice experience. We will rethink that one for next year.

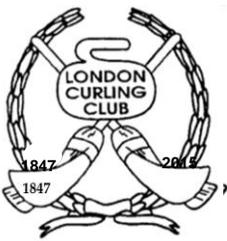
Ken Walmsley led a clinic that provided coaching on different aspects of delivery. Twelve members enjoyed a morning that had all of us shooting in the 80's.

Jinx Finley and Kevin MacDonald lead the elementary school Learn to Curl program. They have had three fun sessions, although a few schools had to cancel due to the teachers' work-to-rule campaign. With a ratio of one coach to four students there is time for lots of practice and lots of fun.

The next big event will be the Jan. 2 evening for members and the public. The evening will start at 7 p.m. for new curlers where they will get some basic instruction. From 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. we will play games. This event fills up quickly so make sure you get registered early.

It has been a busy fall, but our commitment at the club is to provide opportunities for people to enjoy all aspects of the game and to attract new curlers.

Pat Boothe, Skills & Development

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Glass rink's Sifton hat trick, Townsend's rebound highlight day

Doug Glass's Highland rink won its third consecutive Sifton Classic and A flight this month. The same day, Chuck Townsend's LCC rink won the B flight. It was his best finish in the event since winning it all about 20 years ago in one of the first Sifton bonspiels he ever entered. He was a lead on Jim Fitzpatrick's rink that had Al McLeod at second and Ken Walmsley throwing third rocks.

Townsend's passion for curling began in 1954 when he first stepped into the hack at age 16 in high school at Goderich. If you do the math you might think he's running out of chances to win again. Think again. This senior citizen believes in staying in shape. He walks two and a half hours a day.

"Everyone played well," Townsend said of rink mates Walmsley, Ralph Lutes and Barry Montgomery. "We've always had good chemistry. If you don't have that you don't have anything."

The Highland rink switched back-end positions from other years, with skip Don Lahti moving to third and Doug Glass taking over as skip. The winning continued.

The Glass rink won A flight and was first overall with 54¾ points. Second in A flight was Tillsonburg's Dave Ireland rink with 52¾ points, while Jack McLean of Brant Curling Club was third with 40¾ points. Townsend won B flight with 50¾ points. Geoff Clay's St. Marys rink was second in B flight with 41¾ points, while third went to LCC's Peter Jackson rink of John Crosby, John Davidson and Rob Brookshank, with 39 ½ points.

In an age when two-day bonspiels have experienced declining entries, chair Gord Sellery's committee of Don McKay, Al Starratt, Doug Petch and Don Lowry managed to turn it around with 24 teams, two more than last year.

"I think it (low entries) may just be due to the travel distance and maybe accommodation for out-of-town rinks," said Sellery, who was happy with 24 teams, a perfect fit for a six-sheet club.

Burt Dowsett



At the banquet following opening-day play, the Highland rink of (left to right) lead Dick Bowman second Steve Gray, skip Doug Glass and third Don Lahti was presented with the trophy for 2014. The next day the rink won a third consecutive Sifton title.



Chuck Townsend's rink carried the ball for the LCC at this year's Sifton Classic, finishing first in B flight. From left to right, are: Townsend, Ken Walmsley, Ralph Lutes and Barry Montgomery.

Cuddie's LCC rink wins region four in junior men's playdowns

The LCC junior team of skip Russell Cuddie, vice Jonah Mondloch, second Kenneth Malcomson, lead Matthew Allan and coach John Rudd won region four in the Pepsi junior men's playdowns.

They took their first step on Nov. 21 at the Highland, where they advanced out of zone 16 and qualified to compete in the regionals in Sarnia on Nov. 28-29. In Sarnia they won all three games. Congratulation guys!

Three LCC teams competed in the Fairfield-Marriott Challenge in Zone 16, which was held in Chatham on Nov. 21-22. The team of Tyler Childs, Ryan McInerney, Barry Arner, Ryan Gray and Jason Childs went 2-1 before losing in the B final to Blair Willert of Ilderton.

The team of Kirk Massey, Mark Flynn, Carsten Wilson and Ben Walmsley went 2-1 before losing to the Willert team in the B semi-final. The rink of Dave Mann, David Ross, Marcus MacRae and Bruce Thom was 1-2 and did not advance. The other team advancing from Zone 16 on the A side was the Greg Payne rink from Chatham.

Bruce Thom, Leagues & OCA

VOLUNTEER: Olympics capped by lucky charm for Kevin Martin

A few days after Rush arrived in Vancouver, a journalist from China asked him if he had a loonie. He had heard that a loonie was imbedded in the hockey ice at the 2002 Olympics at Salt Lake City. When he asked to see a loonie Rush gave him one. Then he asked if the coin would be imbedded in the curling ice and returned the coin to Rush. A loonie was not buried in the curling ice but Rush's loonie eventually made it into Martin's dressing room through his driver.

The Olympic experience was priceless for Rush. "I was most impressed with the organization. It was the best I've ever seen. To this day I've never seen anything organized as well. They had a lot of money but used it very wisely."

Participating in the Olympics led to Rush volunteering at other major curling events. Another driver he befriended there was from Red Deer, Alberta, and he invited Dave to stay at his house for the 2012 Hearts. He accepted the offer but insisted on becoming a volunteer. Kingston was slated to host the 2013 Hearts so when that city's delegates came to see the process at Red Deer, Rush took them under his wing. "I showed them around. I got to know them." He offered his help and became assistant director of transportation for the Kingston Hearts. His next volunteer event was the 2014 Montreal Scotties, followed by the 2014 Ontario Tankard in Dorchester, at which the Ingersoll Curling Club was the host. He was in charge of transportation.

After the Olympics Rush became heavily involved assembling his driving team for the 2011 Brier in London. His mandate from the CCA (now called Curling Canada) was to change the way driving was handled. It had been one driver for one team. Instead, they wanted to have a drivers' pool. So there would be 20 drivers available for each shift and you would have a taxi-cab style of driving . . . the first person in line takes them wherever they want to go. "Our job was to create a model. It worked out well. We were allowed to drive curlers' families. The ladies would want to go to the mall. In the old system the driver would sit outside waiting at the mall. Now they make a call and we send someone out to pick them up."

It went over well with the players and their wives. At the end, (Jeff) Stoughton commented specifically on that aspect in a very positive way."

Back to the Vancouver Olympics, with his German rink already eliminated and the men's championship final between Martin's Canadian rink and Norway underway, Rush made his move. During the fifth-end break, Martin's coach, Jules Owchar, came into the lounge. Dave handed him something and asked him to give it to Martin. If hockey can have a lucky loonie, Canada's curlers surely were entitled to something that might be beneficial, too.

Rush had decided that would be a Pewter Pocket Charm with an inspirational message on it. It seemed to work. Martin and his teammates won the final, 6-3, and took home gold medals.

Dave Rush took home treasured memories and mementoes of a dream come true.

Burt Dowsett



Dave Rush's license plate shows his passion for curling.

Spring Thaw mixed bonspiel will warm up your winter

A reminder to all mixed curling enthusiasts! The annual Spring Thaw mixed bonspiel will be held on Saturday, Jan. 9. It will be a full day of curling, including, two eight-end games, a hot full-course lunch, coffee, snacks and prizes.

The game times will be determined when all teams are registered. The deadline is Dec. 16. Sign up on the tripod bulletin board in the lounge. Don't forget to wear your summer duds. For more information, contact convener Steve Hobbs at 226-663-1404, or stevehobbs@hotmail.com.

Steve Hobbs, convener

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Seven mixed leagues at LCC attest to its popularity

“The glory is being happy. The glory is not winning . . . The glory is enjoying practising, enjoying every day, enjoying to work hard, trying to be a better player than before.” -- Rafael Nadal

While none of us will reach the heights in curling that Rafael Nadal has in tennis, his message should resonate with most LCC members. Do your best to improve your game, but first and foremost, make it fun.

There are seven mixed leagues at the LCC and most seem to subscribe to that approach. The Wednesday daytime mixed league, launched and convened by Darlene ten Haaf, is a good example of fun, no-strings-attached curling.

“Just drop in, there is no registration. If you have Wednesday afternoons free come out,” says ten Haaf. “There are no commitments, it is totally social. This is a fun game, playing with different people. It is another opportunity for more ice time and fun curling. While Darlene and her husband choose to play on different teams, “If others say I’ve come to play with my husband, we put them together.”

Nancy King, convenor of the Sunday night mixed social league, never reports her league’s results, but is happy to talk about her goals. She tries to make the teams as even as possible and to shorten the gap between winning and losing, points are awarded for each end.

“It (the league) is set up for social enjoyment and exercise,” she says. While the league is mixed, there is no fixed allotment of two men and two women per team. “Some will be two and two; some will be three and one. Gender is not a factor.”

King believes the proximity to other curlers on bordering sheets enhances the social aspect of the game. “There are lots of conversations going on back and forth. It’s a very friendly environment.” The league has 12 teams, up from 11 last year.

Peter Fewster, convenor of the Tuesday night mixed league, thinks that the mixed format is less competitive. “Both men’s only and women’s only leagues have a tendency to become more competitive for some people, although not all. There is not the pressure to perform (in mixed leagues). You try to have fun and if you mess up it does not matter.” Another reason for the popularity of mixed curling is that couples can curl together. “There are two couples that we put on the same team. We call it ‘date night.’ “

The Tuesday night mixed league was launched a few years ago by former club president Connie Weir. Its purpose at the time – and still today – is to provide a bridge between Learn to Curl and competitive leagues. “We do have a good connection with Learn to Curl to get people up from there,” says Fewster. “It is a fun league so people are reticent to leave.” They usually lose five to 10 curlers every year to competitive leagues but those people are replaced by Learn to Curl graduates moving up. This year it has a full slate of 48 curlers



Kerry Traynor, convenor of the Western University faculty and staff league, watches the line of a teammate’s shot.

The Wednesday night President’s league is basically three leagues in one – mixed, men only and women only. Co-convenors Roger and Mary Moyer opt to curl in mixed. Curlers enter it as team. The Moyers’ are on the same team. The ability to play together as teammates, says Mary, was one of the reasons they came to the LCC and left Ilderton, where spouses could not play on the same team. “On a lot of our sheets we have spouses together,” says Mary. “We do have a nice mix. We use five sheets on each of two draws.” This league is probably more competitive because it has both A and B flights. After Christmas, the bottom teams in A flight go down to B, and the top teams in B move up

The mainstay of mixed curling at the LCC had been its Friday night league. It was once viewed as a prime-time slot but that has changed. “This year we have 12 teams occupying all six sheets for one draw. Last year we had 14 teams. Looking back to the early ‘90’s the league had four complete draws, three on Friday and one on Sunday afternoon,” says league co-convenor Dawn Lewis. “It seems people have more options these days such as Knights games on Friday night. There are many mixed leagues to choose from, therefore Friday night is not the most popular but we like it.”

The roots of the Western University faculty and staff league were on campus, but it moved to the LCC when the university’s curling club was closed. The league has faculty, staff and people such as himself who are not associated with Western, says convenor Kerry Traynor. “There are some married couples but the vast majority are just people interested in curling. I think it is less competitive – just for the enjoyment of the game. We keep track of wins and losses but at the end of the year that is not a significant role.”

Traynor is concerned with a decline in the number of curlers. “Last year we lost one team. This year we have only eight teams. “The Western group rotates with two other leagues through three time slots on Tuesday nights and the late draw (9 p.m.) is a problem for some members, says Traynor. Complicating matters, he adds, is that “a number of our people have retired and can play in the daytime now.” The convenor of the seventh mixed league, which curls on Sundays and is primarily for Western students, could not be reached for comment.

Burt Dowsett

Curl for Prostate Cancer silent auction has \$18,000 in donations

At the time of this writing we have 110 donors contributing \$18,000 of donations for the Curl for Prostate Cancer 2016 upcoming silent auction. Twenty golf packages alone are worth \$5,000.

The silent auction will begin on Jan. 10 and run every day until Jan. 20, when it will close at 1 p.m. For those who work for a living, we plan to have designated runners either on cell phones or email systems available during the last few days of the auction. They will make last bids for you.

During the week of Dec. 14 a silent auction listing will be available to all LCC members. This listing will also be on the LCC website under Upcoming Events, Curl for Prostate Cancer.

Curl for Prostate Cancer has two objectives: The first is to increase awareness of a silent disease that affects one in eight men in their lifetime. The second is to raise funds in support of minimally invasive prostate cancer therapies at London Health Sciences Centre's London Regional Cancer Program.

Your participation and support as an LCC member is a key component to our success. Our committee members will be excited to greet you during this auction and clarify any questions related to silent auction items. The silent auction is open to all LCC members, families and friends.

Thanks in advance for your support and participation.

Ken Walmsley, convenor & committee members

Ad revenue hits \$12,500, LCC members urged to support benefactors

This year's total revenue from advertisers reached \$12,500, through in-ice, wall signs, Rock Talk and the LCC Membership Directory ads. You can add another \$6,000 from companies that sponsored club leagues and club bonspiel events with either dollars or product. Through the effort of Ken Walmsley and his committee, sponsors year to date contributed \$6,000 to his charity event. That adds up to almost \$25,000 raised from the companies listed on the centre pages of our directory and on our sponsor board displayed at the front entrance.

With 50 companies who buy advertising and another two dozen sponsors, it is important for our 600 adult members to make an effort to support these companies whenever possible. If each member would look around the club and find at least one or two companies that they could purchase from, as well as letting them know you are there because they support the LCC, it would go a long way in helping us retain this revenue source.

Don Agnew, advertising committee

Santa Claus is coming to LCC

The London Curling Club's Pro Shop is holding a Christmas sale Dec. 14-23, with large price reductions for Goldline curling shoes and Olson brooms. The price for each product is listed with the sale price first, followed by its regular price in brackets.

- Goldline men's and women's Gold \$199 (\$270)
- Goldline men's Silver \$149 (\$180)
- Goldline women's Magenta \$149 (\$180)
- Goldline men's and women's Bronze \$119 (\$140)
- Olson Reactor carbon fibre brooms \$89 (\$130)
- All makes of leather mitts \$27 (\$32-\$34)
- There will be 15 per cent off on all other stock



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New curling cap protects head from temple to temple

When a curler of Brad Gushue's status can fall to the ice on his head, it should make the rest of us aware of our vulnerability. More options for protecting the head will come onto the market.

One of them is a product of a Peterborough-based company called GuardWear. It is marketing a new cap for curlers that protects the head from temple to temple, leaving only the forehead vulnerable. But the forehead is the easiest to protect in a fall because your arms can absorb the impact, says GuardWear owner Jim Jones. There is another cap on the market that protects only the back of the head.

Jones wanted to produce a cap that would not only work but would be something that curlers would be likely to wear.

The GuardWear hat has a short peak so as not to limit a curler's vision. There are two sizes available but either can be tightened or loosened. Jones says his product will absorb the impact on the skull but will not prevent concussions. Neither will a helmet, he adds. This is because on a hard impact with the ice there may be movement of the brain inside the skull. He does not think helmets are the best choice because their hard outer shells may not absorb the impact as well as the compressible protective band inside a cap.

GuardWear is adaptable to other forms of head gear. Jones is currently selling the protective hat though his website (<http://www.guardwear.ca>) but is undecided about other marketing options. The cost is \$59.95 plus tax.

Burt Dowsett

Curler's death after fall on ice a reminder to take precautions

There are a number of ways to fall on curling ice, all of which we have been forewarned. Stepping on the ice with your slider foot first, stepping backwards and tripping on a curling stone, sweeping without a gripper on your slider or just losing your balance can result in major injuries or even death.

Teflon sliders that carry us to the hog line while delivering a rock have a negative side as well. If you lose your balance it's hard to recover before going down. You will either hit the ice or a granite curling stone. Neither is a soft landing.

Concussions from falls on the ice are common. Death is rare but it happens. On Oct. 13 at the Scarboro Golf and Country Club Barbara Weber, 72, turned to move, lost her balance and fell over backwards. The Toronto Star reported that she was conscious when the ambulance arrived, but died a week later. While novices are more at risk than experienced curlers, no one is immune. Weber had been curling for 15 years.

More curlers are opting for head protection such as helmets or caps that have a protective layer inside. Neither will prevent a concussion but may prevent a skull fracture or death. Wearing protection is good but awareness of dangers, such as the location of rocks and other curlers, is a must, as well.

Burt Dowsett



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Skip Janet Stenson's rink, from left to right, Connie Harris, Stenson and Marilynne Van Buskirk. won the Caryl Baker Visage event. Absent was Janice Elloway.

Janet Stenson's rink wins WDS Caryl Baker Visage event

Twelve teams, all keen to start the curling season, participated in the first Tuesday afternoon six-week Caryl Baker Visage event that began on Oct. 20. Winners of the trophy and first place prize were Janet Stenson's team of Marilynne Van Buskirk, Janice Elloway and Connie Harris. Finishing second were Linda Bailey, Joan Cuthbert, Shirley Griffeth and Sharon White. Cindy Thom, Sue Lundy, Mary Stokley and Karen Jacobsen were third. Honourable mention goes to Sandy Ronson's team of Katie Ungar, Mary Lucas and Wanda Mara, who also had four wins. Thanks to convenor Penny Brown and co-convenor Lynda Reesor for organizing this event, as well as sponsors Deyan Adams and Jenn Barnett, owner and manager respectively of Caryl Baker Visage.



Members of the 2015-16 WDS executive are, from left to right: Katie Ungar (photographer/historian), Isabel Lynch (vice chair), Jeanette Walker (secretary), Jinx Findlay (games co-ordinator), Pam Harrison (chair), Marnie Dickout (past chair) and Sherry Chambers (assistant games co-ordinator).

Pam Harrison, WDS chair

Rock Talk seeks volunteers

The editor and page-layout editor of Rock Talk are stepping down at the end of March, 2016. Anyone interested in these volunteer positions should contact LCC manager Greg Lewis.

WDS Christmas party launches Christmas season at LCC

The seven-week event sponsored by Goldline will begin on Tuesday, Dec. 8 at 1:15 p.m., convened by Sherry Chambers and Linda Bailey. At 9 a.m. on Thursday, Dec. 10, the seven-week event sponsored by Marshall's Pasta Mill will begin, convened by Jean Cameron and Mary Lucas. The WDS Christmas party will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 16, beginning at 10 a.m. It will be convened by Miolyka Steele and Heather Greenfield. A six-end game will be followed by a catered lunch and musical entertainment. Tickets are available from Miolyka Steele for \$12 each. Donations for "My Sisters' Place" will be received. Our annual Grandmothers and Over-50 bonspiel will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 6, sponsored by Heather Greenfield, CFP – HollisWealth, and convened by Jean Cameron and Pam Harrison.

Fun game has changes every end in rules, lineup, instructions

On Nov. 19, the WDS held a fun game for their members. Eight ends were played and each end had a different form of counting, lineup of players and instructions on how to play the end. There were times of confusion, disappointment and laughter as the teams read their instructions at the conclusion of each end. The game was followed by light refreshments. Thanks to Jinx Findlay for convening this event. Another day is planned for Feb. 10.



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