

# MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, September 20, 2007

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## **CORPORATE CHALLENGE AND LOWER AGES** **ARE NEW TWISTS FOR ROTARY POND** **HOCKEY**

*Rotary Club of Newcastle Getting Ready For 2008 Event!*

MIRAMICHI – The Rotary Club of Newcastle has released their registration package for their fourth annual **“Rotary Pond Hockey Tournament”** on February 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008. The package can be downloaded from their website [www.MiramichiRotaryPondHockey.com](http://www.MiramichiRotaryPondHockey.com).

Back as chairperson again this year is Geri Mahoney, supported by the regular cast of characters. Geri is excited to announce the Corporate Challenge section, a new twist for the tournament. This will involve 5-6 teams in a closed non-competitive section, with each team having one ex-NHL player on their roster. The corporate sponsor will select the other 3 players for each of the four games (this could be the same three or a maximum of 12 different players). The cost for a sponsor is \$3500 plus supplying the team jerseys. There will be an autograph session available to the public and the celebrities will autograph the team jerseys. Geri says “we expect this will be an added draw for the public to come down to pond level and get involved in our community event – we expect record crowds”. The committee is currently still looking for a few sponsors, with the choice of NHL player being determined by finalization of registration. At present Terry O’Reilly and Rick Middleton of Boston have confirmed their availability and final plans are being made with some ex-Leafs and Canadians. Anyone interested in being a sponsor can contact Colleen at 778-5366.

The regular tournament has room for 100 teams across the six divisions, which include “Female”, “Over 35”, “Over 50”, “Non-Competitive”, “Family”, and the popular “Open Competitive” division. A total of 93 teams registered for the event in February 2007, up from 84 in 2006 and 61 the inaugural year of 2005. With the entry deadline fast approaching, many of the openings for this year’s event have already been spoken for. “The number of teams coming from outside the area continues to rise” says Mahoney.

Changes this year include lowering the overall age for the tournament by one year to 13, as well as allowing the “Over 50” section to dress 5 players. Special arrangements have been made to include children as young as 10-12 years old, as long as they are matched with a parent or guardian. This section will be closed and scheduled with like entries only and non-competitive.

Spectators are always welcome at the event, with viewing available at ice level, along the park boardwalk, or from other vantage points around the cove. Admission to the public continues to be **free**, but

spectators are reminded it is at your own risk. Concessions will be available at ice level. Back by popular demand will be a sound stage with continuous music by Trinity Sounds throughout the weekend. The large number of teams will necessitate continuous play on 12-14 ice surfaces, as well as night games under the lights. The event will not be postponed due to inclement weather conditions. Play begins Friday afternoon and continues all day Saturday. The final games of the tournament will be played Sunday morning and early afternoon. Once again this year the public will be asked to wear hockey jerseys on the first day of the tournament (February 1) to celebrate the weekend – last year’s **“Hockey Jersey Day”** was an enormous success.

French Fort Cove is located along King George Highway, the main traffic artery along the north side of the city. Development of the park was started years ago and is actively managed by the French Fort Cove Commission. As part of a 5 year commitment, the net proceeds from the Pond Hockey tournament will be going towards the year-round Eco-Tourism Center.

Anyone thinking about participating should grab a spot soon - the deadline to enter the tournament is **January 11, 2008!** Registration packages in either language are available for download at **[www.MiramichiRotaryPondHockey.com](http://www.MiramichiRotaryPondHockey.com)**. Registration and payment methods include online registration and Pay Pal, as well as the usual paper and cheque method. See you on the pond!