

# Giovanni Caboto Rink News 09/10 Season

## Family Sundays were a big hit

Families came back to this once-popular rink in droves, after Councillor Palacio announced the family Sundays in his flyer, and the advisory council posters went up in the neighbourhood. There was music on the rink's sound system, and a campfire beside the rink. One family said they saw the campfire from their car as they drove by on St.Clair. The people sitting around in their skates, drinking mugs of hot chocolate and toasting hot dogs, looked so pleased that the family went home and got their skates and came over to the rink.



Hot chocolate campfire

Grandparents who brought their grandkids over to skate seemed to really appreciate being able to sit inside the change room where they could be near the kids but not freezing. The card table that was put there for the seniors almost always had a few grand-dads at it, and the two checkers and chess tables provided another activity for kids between skating sessions. The campfire minder said she had to ask the zamboni driver to bring back more hot dogs from Wallace Rink almost every time he went down there to do the ice maintenance. But the parents also had praise for the apples and the fruit juices being sold – something more nutritious than just pop and chips and chocolate bars!

Families warm up



## Skate loans for school classes



Skate loans

School classes, some from as far away as Rexdale, came to the rink three days a week this season. They found out about the program through flyers that went out to every school office, also posted at Wallace and Dufferin rinks and up the road at Glen Long Rink. *The formula* - prior e-mail contact to book a school visit, a welcoming rink staff person, some good-condition loaner skates for the kids that didn't have any, and free hot chocolate. The loaner skates were provided by CELOS, and the hot chocolate was covered by the left-over Sunday hot-dog money.

When the suggestion came to set up \$2 skate rentals on family Sundays, the rink staff were worried at first - would they have trouble learning how to make that work? But the support staff from Dufferin Rink trained them so well that before long the Giovanni Caboto staff did it easily on their own. That increased the Family Sundays use again, and the rink staff sometimes really had to hustle. Most of them said they didn't mind, though. "The time goes by a lot faster," they said. As it got busier, the income from the skate rentals allowed the hiring of another rink staff, and some additional hours for the rink staff that wanted to earn more. A win-win!



A card break between shinny games

## Pucks and laces and tape for sale: what a good idea

The shinny players were pleasantly surprised to find that if they forgot a puck or their lace broke, they could buy what they needed without having to leave the rink. The front door was always kept unlocked during rink hours and the rink staff were always easily visible (not behind closed doors any more). So it was easy for kids and adults to find a staff person who could unlock the pro box at the front counter, when they needed another puck or more tape.

## Helmet loans for free

This season, rink staff tried out a new approach to promote helmet use for shinny hockey. The City gave them a box and six CSA-approved hockey helmets, and CELOS provided another six. The box was put right by the rink, open, with a big sign encouraging skaters to borrow a helmet if they didn't have one of their own. So nobody had to leave if they didn't have a helmet. On the other hand, those youth or adults who didn't want to wear a helmet were not evicted from the rink. The rink staff felt safer, because no one was getting angry at them. At the same time, the more positive approach brought back the at-risk youth, and the adults who preferred to make their own helmet choice.



Free helmet loans



Some wear helmets, some don't

# Wallace Rink News 09/10 Season

## At last the rink gets its zamboni back



The city rented a modu-link fence for the zamboni, and since the fence was set up near the electric outlet on the lamp-post, the staff were able to plug in the block-heater on the coldest nights. City Hall, High Park, and Giovanni Caboto Rink don't have garages either. All found that the block heater wasn't really necessary. But it was nice to have one, in case. Since Wallace shared the double-shift zamboni drivers with Giovanni Caboto, the ice was cleaned at least four times a day, and the rink users were very happy.



September 17th - just before the gate was fixed

## The players' boxes were re-opened, and the hockey-gate was fixed

Persistence paid off. At first it didn't look promising: ten weeks before rink season, the players' boxes were still sealed shut and the shinny-rink gate was still dangling. But by the time the rink opened, these concerns had been taken care of. The boards had been pried off the top of the players' boxes and an access door had been put in. What an improvement! And the shinny-rink door was back on its hinges, with a better latch that no longer trapped the players inside. Compliments were flying as fast as the puck.



September 17th - just before the boxes were restored

## CELOS applies for a grant from the City

After another season of scrambling to make nutritious snacks for all the hungry skaters, rink users got together with program staff and CELOS workers, and made a grant application to the city. They asked for some shelving, a kitchen counter with a drain pipe and water line that taps into the bathroom plumbing, a four-sink unit and air vent, and a hatch for serving. The proposed budget is pretty low, especially since CELOS got its charitable status in the fall and so can issue tax receipts to a couple of private donors willing to match the city funds. Fingers crossed! The serving hatch is planned to be wide enough to allow the skate rental and pro-shop to operate out of there too, and there's a rumour that the City will provide a city computer, so that the money-handling will be able to follow city policies.

## Councillor Giambone finds money for a natural gas hook-up, and gets a zamboni garage into the capital budget for 2013

Since Wallace-Emerson is already hooked up to gas, the tech services people said it wouldn't be too pricey to run the pipe over to the rink area. That's scheduled to happen in time for the November 2010 rink opening, allowing the zamboni to be switched to a natural gas machine.



Then in three years, the city will finally build a concrete block garage into the berm, with an energy-saving feature: it will be heated by waste heat from the rink condenser! And there is no need to install a new gate leading into the rink from the garage – that gate was already installed when the rink was rebuilt, and soon it will be useful.



2013: garage to be built into the berm on the right