PRO motion PLUS
Girls & Women in Physical Activity & Sport
Network News
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Heroines For The Next Generation – 2007 Honourees For In Her Footsteps Celebrated

by Annie Reid

Heroines can change the world, was the message at the celebration of the 2007 honourees for IN HER FOOTSTEPS . . . CELEBRATING BC WOMEN IN SPORT, a recognition program and exhibit celebrating BC women in sport, housed at the BC Sports Hall of Fame and Museum.

From creating healthy bodies to teaching cooperation, fair play and ethics, involvement in sports and physical fitness helps girls and women in both body and spirit. The IN HER FOOTSTEPS exhibit honours those women who embody excellence in sport and fitness, whether through their own performance, or by enabling others to participate and excel. As honouree Sandra Stevenson said, "I fundamentally believe that sports can change the world."

"Having heroines is crucial to building a future in sport," said Ida Chong, Minister of Community Services and Minister Responsible for Seniors' and Women's

Issues, who helped unveil the exhibit displaying the 2007 honourees. Minister Chong championed the positive effect of roles models in empowering more women and girls in multiple aspects of their lives. "We want BC to lead the way in sports and physical fitness. Following role models can only help us in that goal." She noted the effect strong role models had on her own career and pointed out former Olympian and IN HER FOOTSTEPS 2002 honouree Karen Magnussen in the crowd, saying, "She was my heroine." The IN HER FOOTSTEPS display, now featuring life stories and video testimonials from all honourees, allows future generations to see and experience the heroines of BC sports.

Margaret Maxwell Callaghan, Minister Ida Chong, Irene Schell, Lorraine Greaves and Sandra Stevenson

This year, Helen and Margaret Callaghan, Kathy Shields and Sandra Stevenson join 34 previous honourees in the permanent exhibit celebrating women who have made a difference through sports for girls and women in British Columbia, whether through their own athletic excellence or by increasing opportunities for others.

For honouree Sandra Stevenson, "It's been all for the love of the game." Stevenson began her career as a badminton champion, winning nine national titles, and has since dedicated herself to supporting women's involvement in sports through her leadership, including her recent tenure as CEO and President of Sport BC. "Sport is the common language," she said, noting the power of "what sports can do – from building healthy bodies to creating world peace." Her own leadership skills were fostered on the playing field by her mentors. "So many people taught me to be honourable," she said. Honourees Helen and Margaret Callaghan, sisters from Vancouver, both played for the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, a professional women's baseball league active in the forties and fifties. A documentary about the league and the Callaghan's by Helen's son Kelly Candaele inspired Penny Marshall to make the feature film, "A League of Their Own", starring Geena Davis and Madonna. Helen holds the record for the most stolen bases per

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BRITISH COLUMBIA The Best Place on Earth
2010 LEGACIES NOW

This Issue

Volume 18, Number 2.
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Our Vision

All girls and women in the province of British Columbia will participate in and have access to a complete range of opportunities, choices and resources for positive experiences in physical activity and competitive and recreational sport and have equity as participants and leaders.

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Message from the Chair

Not coming from a sport background (I only played basketball for a short time in high school, and not well at that!), I often think about how I ended up working in sport and how after 18 years I am still here.

Besides having a knack for administration (believe it or not, I do enjoy it!), I found in sport strength, commitment, and passion – and even more in the many women I have had the good fortune of working alongside over the years.

I found in sport strong women who are role models and inspirations.

Women like Wendy Ladner-Beaudry (BC Games Society Co-Chair and former Sport BC Board member), Dena Coward (Director of the Paralympic Games at VANOC and former BC Games Society staffer), Denise Coutts (former Executive Director BC Disability Sports), and Linda Moore (former Curl BC Executive Director).

Women like Sandra Stevenson who has just retired as President & CEO of Sport BC and who was recognized for her long-time commitment to sport as a 2007 *In Her Footsteps* honouree. Sandra is a strong and caring leader; she has left a rich legacy for sport in BC.

Women like Marion Lay, a founding member of ProMOTION Plus who has honoured us by accepting a position as an Honourary Board Member of our organization. Marion has amazing vision and passion. As a leader her passion is evident in her words and actions.

Women like Bryna Kopelow, also one of our founders and an Honourary Board Member. Bryna is a compassionate leader and has the most incredible ability to synthesize thoughts and ideas and in doing so, "hits the nail on the head" every time.

When I am feeling overwhelmed by the tasks at hand for ProMOTION Plus or overwhelmed in general by the tasks that come with working in sport, these are the women I think of and look to for encouragement, ideas, inspiration, and motivation. And they always deliver – these women give of their time, energy, and expertise – they give of themselves; and not just to me but to many of us, and to the sport system as a whole. They make the path easier and the way clearer . . . and for that I am grateful.

The sport system is filled with women who are doing amazing things and I encourage each of you to look around for those who can serve as role models, support networks, and inspiration.

Irene Schell
ProMOTION Plus Chair

game, with 354 stolen bases in just 388 games. Margaret was famous for her base running ability and high hitting rank.

Honouree Kathy Shields played on the Canadian National Basketball team from 1970 to 1975 during her own university career. In 1978 she began her distinguished coaching career with the University of Victoria Vikes, leading them to eight Canadian University Sport National Championships and 14 Canada West Titles. A powerful mentor, Shields placed a remarkable 21 student-athletes on CIS First or Second All-Star teams in 21 years of coaching.

In Her Footsteps alumni Karen Magnussen

IN HER FOOTSTEPS . . . CELEBRATING BC WOMEN IN SPORT is a joint initiative of the BC Sports Hall of Fame and Museum, 2010 Legacies Now, ProMOTION Plus, and the BC Centre of Excellence for Women's Health.

It's not only athletes who the exhibit is designed to inspire. Lorraine Greaves, Executive Director of the BC Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, believes that initiatives like IN HER FOOTSTEPS have the power to impact a wide range of women, not only those currently involved in sport." One of the chief issues we have to deal with is that 51% of women are inactive. The impact of an event like this on those women is that while many women will never be in an elite sport, many may be inspired to take part. We want to encourage that 51%, or maybe the daughters of that 51%."

Carla Qualtrough, Director of Inclusion Initiatives for 2010 Legacies Now, echoed this sentiment. "Initiatives like IN HER FOOTSTEPS encourage healthy active lifestyles to enable each generation to inspire the next. All the women honoured in IN HER FOOTSTEPS embody the values of excellence and leadership." As Minister Chong reiterated, "I can only hope that more girls and women will follow IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS."

Leadership Award Recipient Honoured at ASRA Spirit of Excellence Conference

ProMOTION Plus and ASRA partnered to recognize Karen Collins with a special Leadership Award at the ASRA Awards and Recognition Banquet held Oct. 20th as part of the Spirit of Excellence Conference in Richmond, BC. ProMOTION Plus Board members, Kim Appleton and Jennifer Fenton were on hand to present the award.

Karen, a member of the Cowichan Tribes in Duncan, BC was chosen for her lifelong involvement in sport as an athlete, coach, and volunteer. She serves as an ASRA Board member for Region 4 – Vancouver Island. Among her many achievements, Karen was an Aboriginal Team BC Coach for the North American Indigenous Games in 2006 and will be an Aboriginal Team BC Coach at the 2008 North American Indigenous Games. She is BC's representative for the Aboriginal Sport Circle and is currently employed as the Cowichan Tribes University Advisor. She has coached softball, basketball and soccer in her community. Karen is passionate about her work and says

"I love working with youth, and feel my training in child and youth care/social work and addictions would be a benefit when working with youth. I live a very healthy lifestyle, and feel you need to lead by example to help youth in crisis, and keep them playing sports or participating in cultural events."

Congratulations Karen!

TOP RIGHT: Karen Collins, Kim Appleton and Jennifer Fenton.
BOTTOM RIGHT: Karen Collins

Female Athletes in the Media: Are They Fairly Portrayed?

by Kristen McCarthy

Tonight's CTV primetime sports highlights features adrenaline soaked play by plays and up to the second scores on the Canucks, the B.C. Lions, and the Seattle Mariners. Tune into TSN's SportsCentre for the Maple Leafs' score. But, if you're looking for straight up commentary on women's sports, early morning is the best time to catch a round of ladies golf or the curve of Anna Kournikova's thighs.

"Let's face it, there are a lot of pro women's sports out there, but we don't hear about them or see them," says Kathy Kovacs, CTV sportscaster. During our interview she is quick to agree that televised sports coverage is inequitable. "A lot of people say, 'well sorry, I'm not so much interested in women's sports because they can't jump as high, they can't run as fast, and they can't shoot as hard.'"

Regular television listings for women's sports are selective and hence women's sports are often featured at obscure times or not at all. According to the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles, ninety-four percent of local television sports coverage is dedicated to men's sports, while an average of 5% is allotted to women's sports. The difference in coverage also manifests in the amount of visual play by plays, total running times, and the range of sports depicted. The numbers in Canada are even lower with the Canadian Association for Advancement of Women and Sport (CAAWS) reporting that female athletes receive, on average, just 3% of media coverage.

"People want more, a bigger bang for their buck," Kathy Kovacs explains. Women's sports stories are getting harder and harder to do because of lack of interest. Often a women's team that is doing "extraordinarily well" in the playoffs might get a brief mention in a 20 second clip, but would never be the two minute feature. Beyond the few professional women's sports teams that earn recognition in the media, like soccer and rugby, most women's sports are played at the amateur level which earns them the reputation of being less entertaining. "When it comes to covering the WNBA (Women's National Basketball Association) it's a joke," says Kovacs, who has seen first-hand the bias against female basketball players among her male contemporaries.

It seems that the world of popular sport like the entertainment world believes that "bigger, it's better". Is this simply a reflection of the values of our current culture or is there more at play here? And what is a multi-media company to do? "A lot of these stations and these networks are still run by fairly old school management, which if you read between the lines is often men," says Kovacs. "It's one of the slowest changing businesses."

One of Canada's largest private broadcasters, CTV plays little brother to the media conglomerate Bell Globemedia, which owns 21 stations and 16 speciality channels, including the #1 rated sports channel TSN. In effect, the collective echo of the "old school management" at CTV reverberates wide across Canada's media space.

"Like any business," Kovacs adds, "it comes down to money." The money comes from the advertisers who cast their net out to a target audience. Kathy Kovacs emphasizes the fact that, unlike her contemporaries at TSN, she produces her own segments and doesn't seek approval on subject matter, including gender specific stories. "90% of the time it's 'do we have time to cover it?' The other 10%, we have to decide, 'will people watch and will people find it interesting?'"

Although Kovacs insists that gender isn't an overriding factor in whether or not a story gets aired, it's in that last 10% where the question of gender comes into play. "If I decide to do a piece on a woman basketball player it would be because there is something extraordinary about her." Kovacs recently aired a story about a female ultimate fighter because she seemed to be an oddity in the male dominated sport. "This woman was very feminine. She'd go out and get her hair done before the fight, she'd get her nails done to match her outfit, and get her opponents name fake tattooed on her."

What is extraordinary about the image of this female ultimate fighter is the fusion of two stereotypes perpetuated in the world of mainstream sport: femininity for sexual consumption and masculinity as showmanship through displays of force and power.

Kathy Kovacs stresses the importance of human interest stories when it comes to featuring women in sport. Segments that highlight a woman's athletic skill and prowess are rare, and in most sports circles considered a waste of time and resources. "A woman's provincial championships wouldn't entice us", admits Kovacs. "To get us out to do a story on that would not be because they were provincial champs, it would be because they are running a marathon to raise funds for cancer research or one of the girl's broke her back and she is planning on teaching paraplegics how to play soccer."

Kovacs believes that her female viewers relate to the human interest spin on

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Focus on Women in BC

This issue's featured woman is Kathy Klein, Director of Accommodation for the 2008 Kimberley-Cranbrook BC Winter Games.

Kathy Klein

Having grown up in Prince George, British Columbia, Kathy relocated to Cranbrook in 1988 and quickly became involved in the local badminton club and shortly thereafter started a junior program that she kept operating for 9 successful years. Her involvement in badminton, both locally and provincially, afforded her the opportunity to be part of the results team at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta.

Through her volunteer work, Kathy became conscious that many sports programs were not readily available to Cranbrook children. In an attempt to remedy the situation, Kathy began working with Pete Quevillon, Director of KidSport Development at Sport BC. She founded her own community chapter of KidSport that is now in its 7th year and supports approximately 100 children every year.

Kathy has been successful in bringing provincial championships to Cranbrook, including two badminton events and a high school volleyball championship. Mount Baker Secondary, where Kathy works as the Athletic Coordinator, runs a successful athletic program that often sees many of its student athletes moving on to play at the post-secondary level. Kathy is especially proud of the thirteen female athletes currently playing volleyball, basketball and soccer in British Columbia, Alberta and in the United States.

FEMALE ATHLETES IN THE MEDIA *(con't from page 4)*

sports stories. "It's my job to make sure that they get the information and do it in a way that they don't feel threatened," she explains. In her eyes, sports reporters are the good guys, and on rare occasion, the good girl: "I'm a huge advocate of 'don't choose according to gender, choose according to merit.'"

Kovacs believes in her mandate to make sport accessible to a wider audience. But how can broad appeal exist in a world built on rigid definitions of what great athleticism is, or should be? In the sports room there is a belief that the target audience is male, and the female audience base exists on the fringes. "There is a pecking order and we have to follow that – it's what people want to watch," Kovacs admits. "We tend to cover the men first and I only say the women's scores, I hate to say, when it's playoffs." CTV's 11:30 sports highlights allow five to six minutes to recap the day in sports. "They [women's sports teams] are the first ones to get wiped off the show if we're tight for time. But that's [viewer] interest."

Or is it?

Research carried out by the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles shows that women represent 40% of all high school and collegiate athletes. Even more significant is the record breaking data collected from the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, where women compromised 40.7 percent of the total number of athletes and participated in 45 percent of the total number of events. Coincidently, viewer interest in the Athens Games shot up to 3.9 billion viewers worldwide, more than any other previous year, which more than suggests an interest in amateur women's sports exists.

"It's a catch 22," Kovacs says. "People can argue that 'well of course we don't get as much media attention, and people don't know about us to go out, and it's a great product.' But it's really, really hard to rethink in a man's perspective that this is worthy."

It's no secret that the world of professional sports is a man's world, one that venerates a performance ideal that pushes out the attributes of the female athlete. To profile more women would mean to highlight sports at an amateur level, not just at the Olympics, but locally on a continuous basis. Unfortunately, according to Kovacs, CTV and other major stations won't be doing this any time soon.

So perhaps it's time our sportscasters be the ones to make the greatest change. Kovacs is one of eight female sportscasters in Canada who has made her way into the world of sport and stayed there. If more sportscasters respected the competence of their female viewers and acted, not as guides to men's professional sports, but as analysts of the widening interpretation of athletic performance, women's sports might find their way out of the "human interest" category and onto their own playing field.

Olympic Media Coverage – Is it Equitable?

by AJ Murray

The Olympics Games is undeniably the most important sporting event for amateur athletes, particularly female athletes, as more women are involved in amateur than professional sports. With the 2010 Olympic Winter Games only 2 years away, media outlets have already begun researching and preparing pieces that will be aired during the Olympics. It's important to look at the past coverage of female athletes at the Olympics with a view to improving media coverage for 2010. Have individual female athletes and women's teams received adequate media attention? Will the 2010 Olympics be any different? Brian Williams is a well respected sportscaster who has worked with the CBC for over 30 years and more recently was selected to be CTV's prime-time host of their 2010 Olympic Games coverage. Williams is also the father of 3 girls and says the topic is near and dear to his heart.

"I've always believed that you sell women in sport and their involvement in sport, not as an obligation, but as an involvement and as a spectacle that stands on it's own."

When asked about how he thinks media coverage of the 2010 Olympic Games will go, Williams is unequivocal,"It will not be based on whether it's men or women. I think at the Olympics coverage is often dictated by medals and how well they do. You tend to go to the events where Canada or other countries have a big name."

Wouldn't it be great if every sportscaster and network felt the same way? In the last decade women's participation has grown by leaps and bounds but the media coverage hasn't kept pace with the greater number of women participating in the Olympics. One of the difficulties lies with the planning of competitions; decisions about scheduling are made by the organizing committee years before the Games actually take place. If several different women's competitions are scheduled on the same night, the media may not be able cover every event. In Salt Lake City for example, the women's curling final, free skate and women's ice hockey gold medal final were all on a Thursday. Women's events held on the final weekend of the Olympics would get much better coverage.

Another factor is the perceived popularity of men's versus women's sports. Some would argue that the Olympic Games are all about ratings, about what is going to provide the most viewers and hence the most advertising revenue. According to Williams this is an issue, but not a gender issue: "Obviously when a Canadian wins a medal it's a big story, whether it's a male or a female. Cindy Klassen was *the* story of the Turin Olympics. The president of the Olympic Committee said that at the end of the games. It had nothing to do with her being a man or a woman; it had everything to do with her being a great athlete. And to suggest that it had something to do with her being a man or a woman demeans women's sports."

When asked about CTV's plan for the Olympic Games Williams is confident, "I think we're to the point now where the attention is based on performance and performance potential as opposed to gender. You can quote me on that." If this is the case, we can expect greater coverage of women's competitions in 2010. According to Karin Lofstrom of CAAWS, "If the media is covering those who they expect to win or earn medals they should be covering more women's sports than men's based on the Canadian women's medal production at the Torino Olympics Games where women won 2/3 of Canada's Olympic medals."

In the years up to and including the 2010 Olympic Winter Games let's all watch closely and hold CTV and other Canadian networks to that promise.

Irene Schell chosen as "Chef de Mission" for the Western Canada Summer Games

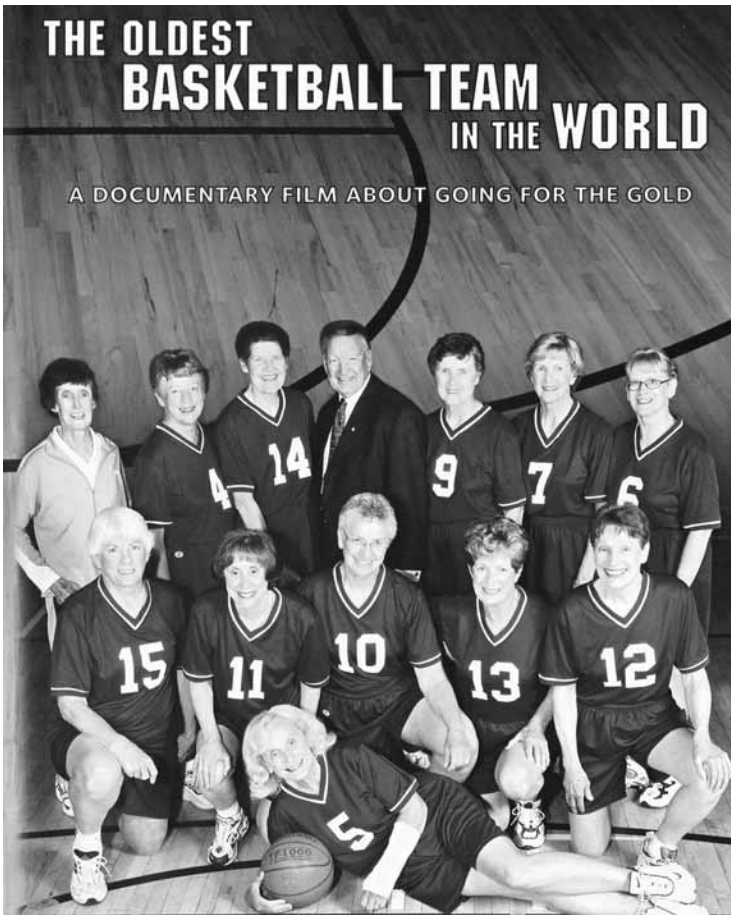
We are proud to announce that the Chair of our Board, Irene Schell has been selected as the Team BC "Chef de Mission" for the 2011 Western Canada Summer Games. Irene will be responsible for providing leadership to Team BC by overseeing administration, logistics, and performance preparation. She will also train and supervise the Mission staff.

The 2011 Western Canada Summer Games will be held in Kamloops, British Columbia in early August. The Games will bring together approximately 2,300 athletes, coaches, managers, and officials from four provinces and three territories for 10 days of high calibre multi-sport competition.

With eighteen years of experience in the BC sport system, Irene is the perfect candidate for the position. Having been involved in provincial multi-sport Games in the past, Irene is looking forward to representing BC once again. "I am honoured to have been selected to lead the committed athletes, coaches, managers, practitioners, and mission staff who will form Team BC for the 2011 Western Canada Summer Games. And having these Games here in our own province makes this undertaking that much more exciting."

The Oldest Basketball Team in the World

Reviewed by Samantha Langdorf



For most basketball teams, game preparation consists of a disciplined regime of passing drills, running lines, and strategizing plays. For the women of *The Retreads* there is an additional step to their warm up that is quite possibly even more essential than the lay-up drills that precede each of their games. Composed entirely of women over the age of 65, *The Retreads* begin every game by applying arthritis cream, securing their braces, and ensuring that nitro glycerin is on hand should Joan's heart begin to act up.

In the documentary, "The Oldest Basketball Team in the World", *The Retreads* are profiled as they prepare for the 2005 World Masters Games in Edmonton where they are alone in their age category. The film follows the women as they come out of retirement and relearn how to do lay-ups and hook shots, skills that they thought were long lost. They overcome hip replacements and heart attacks to enter into competition against teams that are faster, stronger, and younger. In the process, they achieve a level of play that is nothing short of inspirational.

For more information or to order your own DVD:
www.oldestbasketballteam.com

It Takes a Community

by Beverley Siver, Executive Director

After a very busy summer which transformed into a rather hectic fall, I recently took a few moments to reflect on my time here at ProMOTION Plus. It came to me that I am currently beginning my fourth year here as the Executive Director of ProMOTION Plus. In that time, I have personally, learnt a great deal, met and worked with some truly phenomenal people and developed a much better sense of the inner workings of the BC sport and recreation system.

ProMOTION Plus has had a much longer existence in the sport and recreation sector and has had time to become known as a vibrant, innovative and nurturing organization. Upon reflection, the work this organization has accomplished in its seventeen years of existence is nothing short of outstanding. Today, we are poised to reap the benefits of the ground-breaking work initiated by our founding mothers throughout the 90s; they deserve our thanks and I am proud to continue the work they started.

Very early on ProMOTION Plus, its staff and board understood and believed in the power of partnership and the importance of engaging the sport, recreation and physical activity community from within to become messengers of fairness and equity. It takes a community to create change and it takes an organization with great vision to provide opportunities and to take action.

2007 Bobbie Steen Awards

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
February 11th, 2007

2007 Bobbie Steen Awards of Excellence

Two Bobbie Steen Awards of Excellence, one ***Career Achievement Award*** and one ***Development Award***

These awards were created to recognize outstanding individuals or organizations who demonstrate exemplary leadership in sport and recreation making a contribution to promote access and opportunity for girls and women in the province of BC.

NOTE: The Career Achievement Award does not include a cash disbursement; however the Development Award has a **$1500** disbursement.

In partnership with BC Games Society, Sport BC and Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts, BC Government.

2007 Bobbie Steen Legacy Foundation Award – $1000

The Bobbie Steen Legacy Foundation has been created to provide financial support to charitable activities dedicated to advancing gender equity in physical activity and sport and/or the community betterment resulting from female involvement in physical activity and sport. The amount of **$1000** is awarded to an emerging leader whose dedication to the women and girls of BC parallels those of Bobbie Steen and the Foundation.

Details and application forms available at
www.promotionplus.org.

GIRLS ONLY INCENTIVE PROGRAM – WINTER 2008

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
December 10th, 2007

The Girls Only Incentive Program is a partnership between ProMOTION Plus and BCRPA. The program's objective is to provide sport opportunities for non-active girls and women in all regions of BC and to support sport-based programs designed for females of all ages. Successful applicants may receive funding to a maximum of $2,500 for one program.

WHO CAN APPLY:

- Any municipal recreation department in British Columbia
- Community Association that provides sport and/or recreation programs
- Not for profit societies and organizations that provide sport and/or recreation programs
- PSOs and MSOs

Applications available at:
www.promotionplus.org

Publication Agreement Number 41384544

In Her Footsteps...
CELEBRATING BC WOMEN IN SPORT

In Her Footsteps . . . Celebrating BC Women in Sport

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

We are celebrating BC women in sport and are seeking nominations for 2008 honourees for inclusion in the In Her Footsteps exhibit at the B.C. Sports Hall of Fame and Museum.

This exhibit showcases women who have made a difference. It honours individuals and teams; women who are or have been athletes, coaches, officials, judges, pioneers or advocates for girls' and women's participation in physical activity and sport. Above all, it honours women who have left a legacy and who are deserving members of the sport, recreation and physical activity communities.

Application Deadline: April 15th, 2008

NOMINATION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT:
www.bcsportshalloffame.com
or www.promotionplus.org

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