

V A L L E Y

Let the Cowichan NAIG volunteering begin

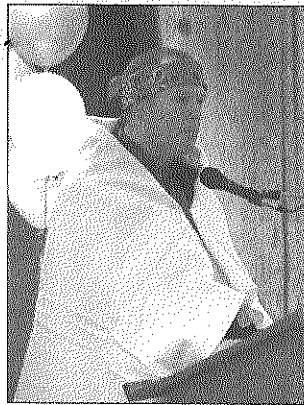
THEY WANT YOU: Three Point Properties steps in a volunteer sponsor

MIKE D'AMOUR
News Leader Pictorial

During much pomp and ceremony, the North American Indigenous Games unveiled its new volunteer centre, a place that needs to draw thousands of bodies to help pull off the August 2008 event.

The sponsor of the volunteer program — Three Point Properties — was also announced at the Thursday night event held at the Quamichan House at the Quw'utsun' Cultural and Conference Centre.

Ross Tennant, president of Three Point, told the assembled crowd — which included several Cowichan Valley Regional District directors, Duncan Mayor Phil Kent, NDP MP Jean Crowder and



Ross Tennant

Phil Noonan, who represented the local RCMP — the power of volunteerism cannot be underestimated.

"Noah's Ark was built by volunteers," he said.

"The Titanic was built by professionals," he deadpanned.

On a more serious note, Tennant said there is some separation in the Valley that the 2008 Games could remedy.

"Issues and sometimes space divides us, but the 2008 Games provides us a chance to come together as a community," said the man at the helm of an ambitious proposal to build thousands of homes on the old Bamberton cement site.

The community will have to come together because organizers predict they'll need upward of 3,000 volunteers to make sure the NAIG comes off according to plan.

But Tennant said he's sure Cowichanians will step up to the plate.

"I'm very impressed with all the work (organizers) have done so far," he said.

"That level of commitment will only grow as we get closer to the games."

The announcements were just part of a full evening that featured food and entertainment in the form of drummers and various dancers.

Rick Brant, CEO of the games, said he's pleased Three Points is now on board.

"Ross as a developer knows



Mike D'Amour

A dancer watches as ceremonies begin to announce Three Point Properties is the corporate sponsor of the 2008 NAIG.

all about building homes that will withstand the test of time," he said.

"We want the work we do to reflect that too, but we can't do that without the foundation of volunteers."

Added Cal Swustus, Cowichan 2008 chair: "The support demonstrated by Three Point Properties is fundamental to the success of the volunteer program."

"Their contribution is a testament to their commit-

ment to this community and the people who live here," he said.

As well, there will be an open house at the new volunteer centre from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 23.

While the push is on for volunteers, not everyone who applies will be accepted.

Some of the rules state volunteers must: be older than 16, be willing to commit a minimum of 25 hours during the games, provide a criminal

background check and attend pre-games training sessions.

The games, which are scheduled to run Aug. 3 to 10, are expected to draw more than 6,000 participants and more than double that number of spectators.

As well, the games are predicted to give the Valley's economy a \$26 million boost.

Anyone interested in volunteering or wanting more information is urged to call 748-0644.



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days until the Cowichan 2008 North American Indigenous Games