

July 11, 2014



Greetings!

Welcome to another season of skating! Effective July 1st, we have a new Charter Oak board and we hope to institute change in the Club based on the feedback we have received from many of the parents and skaters. Our members have so much enthusiasm and ideas to make Charter Oak a beneficial resource for our skaters so that they may achieve their goals and dreams. Many of you have also expressed that you would like to see more club activities and community outreach. The dynamics of skating have changed over the last few years and it is important that we all work together to provide the skaters with a healthy, positive environment that encourages them to continue to move forward.

Why Charter Oak?

I have been asked this question many times. I, myself, have also wondered, "Why Charter Oak?" My daughter, Gabriela, has been skating since she was five years old. Charter Oak is the third club we have been part of. Our first club was lost to a rink that felt hockey was the better choice. Our second club was far from home and ice time was later in the evening which did not work well on school nights. And then, we found Charter Oak. From the moment she joined this club, Gabriela has felt like this is her second home. The overall camaraderie among the skaters has provided a support system whether she has done well or bad in a competition or whether she was off the ice for a few weeks due to injury. I have personally come to know many of the young skaters of this club and I can see a genuine caring and concern for their fellow skaters. It was great to see all of them come together at the last banquet and cheer each other on as we presented awards, certificates and watched photos of the prior season.

There have been also times of conflict and I have seen the skaters work through them. It is not always like this at other clubs. As one of our initiatives this year, the Board will actively promote United States Figure Skating's SafeSport Program along with our Club's Code of Conduct and Skating Etiquette Rules.

So, "Why Charter Oak?" Charter Oak is the skaters that belong to it and the club leaders' continual commitment to make it an integral part of their skating careers. It is the parents who provide support to their skaters and their willingness to help other parents and skaters. Charter Oak is not a building or a rink. Charter Oak is the people who make me want to be a part of it.

Where is the Club going this year?

We have many ideas for the club this year but we also recognize that there are some areas that need improvement or need help. In the past, the responsibility has fallen almost solely on the Board members to manage club events and activities. This is a monumental task for a handful of people so it is extremely important that our members volunteer to support club functions, events and activities.

Test Sessions

The consistent feedback I have received is about the test sessions: inconsistency, last minute cancellations, etc. The Board recognizes this and we have put into place a new test committee which will assume responsibility for the sessions in September. Our new Test Chair, Velma Tapia, will be joined by

Carol Meltzer, Kirsten Romanelli, Leslie Traubert and myself. We will all be cross trained in running a test session and the plan is to rotate the responsibility of running each test session so that the burden does not consistently fall on one person. We would like to have six committee members so if you are interested in being the sixth member, please email me and let me know so that we can include you in part of the training this summer. It doesn't stop there. Volunteers are still needed at each session to run it successfully. If you would like to be part of the test session volunteer pool, please let me know. We will also be looking at our membership records to identify the times of year that our members test the most so that we can offer test sessions during these peak times. The test session calendar for September 2014 thru June 2015 will be available at the end of the summer.

We are almost ready to launch EntryEeze for test sessions, which will make the process much easier for you. We hope to have it active next week, in time for the August 3rd test session. (We will still accept paper applications, of course.)

New Committees

We would like to start two new committees this year to address two important needs for the Club: Hospitality and Events/Fundraising:

The **Hospitality Chair and Committee** are responsible for coordinating the contribution of food for Judges Hospitality at our competition and test sessions. The Committee is also responsible for coordinating food donations for club parties and events. The Club is looking for a Chair and three to four members to serve as the committee.

The **Events/Fundraising Chair and Committee** is responsible for scheduling events for our skaters and running fundraising activities. We already have a tentative event schedule for the season and some fundraising ideas; we just need a Chair and a committee to execute them.

If you are interested in either Chair positions or would like to be a member of either committee, please email me.

What's next

The next two months are going to be very busy as we work on the Club's plan for the season and we form our committees. We have the upcoming Charter Oak and test session the weekend of August 2nd & 3rd and volunteers will be needed. Please keep an eye out for future correspondence from the club regarding opportunities for each event.

I will also be sending a survey out to members in the next couple of weeks so we can get more feedback as to what you want to see happen with Charter Oak this season and future seasons to come. Your continual ideas and contributions to the Club will ensure its success and growth!

Best regards and happy skating!
Michele Cicala