

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Mark Maestrone

## ***New Membership Category Inaugurated***

SPI's Board of Directors held a conference call meeting on November 7 during which an important change was made to our society's membership structure. In an effort to increase our retention rate from year to year, as well as add new members (especially from overseas), SPI will now include an Internet-Only option costing \$15 per year worldwide. Members in this category will download their quarterly copies of the journal and auction directly from our website to their computers. Regular members will also be able to access these files.

To download files members must first obtain a username and password by going to the SPI website and clicking on the "Members Only" button at the top of the page.

This is a one-year trial program for the current membership year (September 1, 2009 through August 31, 2010).

In other actions, the Board will be revising the current criteria for awarding the SPI Best-of-Show at exhibitions. There was some confusion on the part of the jury at SESCAL as to which exhibits qualified for the award; we wish to make it clear that ALL sport and Olympic exhibits, regardless of class, are eligible. And to encourage new exhibitors of sports and Olympics, it was agreed that we would add single-frame as well as novice awards.

## ***SPI and FIPO***

Mr. David Maiden has been appointed the new coordinator of the Olympic Collectors Commission at IOC Headquarters in Lausanne. He replaces Dr. Manfred Bergman who has retired.

Mr. Maiden and I have had meaningful discussions about SPI's standing in FIPO as well as about

future programs. He hopes, for the first time, to be able to hold the 2011 Olympic Collectors Fair in the U.S. as part of the National Sports Collectors Convention run by Olympin. While there won't be a philatelic exhibition as part of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games, Mr. Maiden did confirm that there would be a London 2012 Olympex (the new name for Olympic philatelic exhibitions).

## ***Vancouver 2010***

As this will be the final issue of *JSP* before the upcoming Vancouver Olympic Winter Games in Canada, I would be interested in knowing which members will be attending. I will be up there for the first week. If time permits, it would be nice to meet up with other SPI members! If you'll be there, drop me an email (markspi@prodigy.net) with the dates you'll be in Vancouver and any contact information (hotel and phone/cell number).

## ***Upcoming Changes to SPI Website***

We're working on some interesting upgrades to the SPI website. In addition to setting up a password protected "Members Only" area of the site, I'm also working on providing a blog which hopefully will be up and running in time for the Vancouver Olympics. My intention is to report daily on the "happenings" direct from the Games!

Once again we are at the end of a year, so on behalf of the officers and Board of Directors of SPI I would like to wish everyone a ...

*Happy Holidays ☺  
A Healthy, Prosperous New Year!*

**The SPI web site is located at: <http://www.sportstamps.org>**

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