



**World's Largest Olympic Collectors Club**  
**PO Box 777 - Guilderland, NY - 12084**  
**Phone: (518) 355 - 9445**

Established 1982 - Our 36th year - Issue No 144 - December 2017

Holiday Greetings to our **505** Olympin members in 34 nations around the world. As you will read on this first page, **this is the Club's annual renewal newsletter**. Please read carefully to find out if you are one of the 184 members who need to renew.

There are a couple of terrific articles in this newsletter, written by **Ron Finnigan** and **Pete Wade**. If you are considering attending the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics in February, please read Pete's article before making your plans.

## **C L U B**

## **B U S I N E S S**

### **2018 RENEWALS ARE NOW DUE**

### **2018 MEMBER BADGE**

This is the third December renewal newsletter since the Club instigated Electronic memberships in 2015. Each of the 184 members whose dues will expire in one month was sent a postal reminder. Read below to find out your status.

The 2018 Olympin member badge will be sent out as soon as you renew in December. Those who are paid through 2018 or beyond should already have their 2018 member badge. Those renewing later may not get theirs until mid-March 2016, as I may not be at home to send them, until then. Going to PyeongChang for the Games? Wear your Olympin badge and meet other members of the Club!

**Written** – All 62 Written members are receiving their renewal status with this newsletter. There are 31 of you whose dues is expiring at the end of December, with the other 31 having future years paid for. Your personal renewal form is either **pink** (for members without an email), or **white** (for those with emails). If your dues is expiring, it is written right at the top of the page. A detailed instruction sheet is enclosed with your personal form, to help you renew as soon as possible. In addition, I'm sure you have noticed I am encouraging you to convert to Electronic. If you have email, you will be converted next year. I can no longer print and mail newsletters and Directories for those who can receive them over the internet.

Thanks again to member **Oakley Hammond** for the designs he submitted for the 2017 and 2018 pins. And to the USOC for their effort to get the PyeongChang logo on our pins. It just wasn't doable this time. We will start early to get the Tokyo 2020 logo on our 2019 and 2020 badges!

### **TWO MORE MEMBERS PASS AWAY**

**Electronic** – A total of 153 Electronic members were sent a reminder on November 20th (about a week ago) that your dues expires after December. It contained your personal listing to review and update yourself on the Club website. The letter was sent by regular mail and included a personalized renewal form. If you received such a letter, please renew as soon as possible, hopefully for 3 or 5 years.

It is with great sadness that we announce the deaths of two members. Barbara Augustine phoned to let us know that her brother **Pete Sorensen** died on August 2, 2017. Pete was 72, lived in Wisconsin and specialized in Volleyball pins.

A month later, I received another sad call that **Ivan LeBlanc** passed on September 25, 2015. His wife wanted us to know Ivan was 77 when he died, and they had been married 57 years, living in Winnipeg. Because Ivan cherished his hobby so much, **Connie** will continue the membership in her name.

**Visit our Website! [www.olympinclub.com](http://www.olympinclub.com)**

## SOME EXPLANATIONS FROM DON

It's no secret that I have been gently pushing all members to renew for multiple years this year. And I also have been pushing Written members to convert to Electronic memberships. What is going on to drive these two requests?

### Encouraging Multiple Year Renewals

As many of you are aware, postal rates here in the U.S. have escalated at a fantastic rate. And workers at our local Post Office tell me this trend will continue. Here is a picture of the trend the past ten years to mail 500 members their Member Badge:

Average Yearly	<u>2007</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2022</u>
Postage to Mail				
Member Pin	\$400	\$1400	\$2950	???

The above numbers do not include the cost of the pins themselves, or the cost of shipping supplies, but both have remained fairly constant.

The postage cost was not as much as shown above because, beginning in 2013, we started having 2 years of member pins made at the same time, since we were getting approval for 2 designs at a time:

2013 & 2014	Sochi 2014
2015 & 2016	Rio 2016
2017 & 2018	PyeongChang 2018

And going forward:

2019 & 2020	Tokyo 2020
2021 & 2022	Beijing 2022

Since we have had two years of member pins available, we have been sending them both to members paid for 2 years or more. Thus the idea to make all memberships expire every other year in an even numbered year. Then, instead of \$3000 a year to mail your pins, we will spend \$3000 every other year, an average of \$1500 savings per year.

Our goal is to have member dues cover two years at a time. The cost savings is obvious. Also obvious to me is having to collect dues half as often, and also reducing the tremendous time spent mailing member pins to half as much. (Especially those requiring the tedious custom's forms!)

## Encouraging Conversion to Electronic

Of our 62 remaining Written members, 35 have email access, and 27 do not have Email addresses in their listing. I am asking again that those Written members who can, please convert to Electronic. My goal is that only a few people will be forced to remain with a written membership, and they will be people with no access to a computer.

The difference in dues for Written and Electronic is based on postage and printing costs to mail newsletters and the Directory. It averages about \$10 per year per member. What bothers me is that about 40 members could also convert to Electronic. I care because I am the one standing in the print shop reproducing the copies, then mailing them – at no cost for my time. For 37 years, I have never charged for my time, and I am getting tired of doing it.

It is probable that 2018 is the last year that I will be doing this work for members who are able to open and read their material on their computer, or at a library, etc. I don't mind doing it for those who absolutely need my help. That is why I am offering "2 for 1" exchange this one last time. As an example, if you are paid ahead 4 years Written, I will convert you to Electronic and change you to being paid ahead 8 years. Please, I need your help.

### 37-YEAR OLYMPIN PHOTO HISTORY

At the October 1<sup>st</sup> member meeting in Lake Placid, it was discussed that a photo history of our club should be added to our Olympin website. Marie Bigsby is taking on this challenge. Since then, Mark Maestrone has developed a program for her to add pictures in galleries organized by years. She has pics from all of Ed Beaupre's albums, but not nearly enough to include the entire Club. She is asking Club members to contact her at [cvcrew@yahoo.com](mailto:cvcrew@yahoo.com) if you have pictures of members from the beginning of the Club (1982) to the present at meetings, shows or Olympics. Group pictures are preferred.

Mark Maestrone has created the Photo Gallery within the Members-Only area of our website. Just log on to the MEMBERS area and click on "View Photo Galleries" in left sidebar. Right now, only some test pics from the last L.P. Show are on it. Let's get everyone involved to send her those pics so we have a memorable pictorial history!

## THINKING ABOUT PYEONGCHANG?

By Pete Wade

I recently returned from a two-week visit to Korea in preparation for the 2018 Winter Games. If you plan to head to Korea for the Games, you may find some of my experiences of value. This is an update to my article in the last newsletter, as I was there only a few days when I sent that home to Olymphin. This is a more complete summary.

### Location:

The Games are being held in two “clusters”. These are: The Mountain Cluster (“outside” venues at four sites in PyeongChang province) and the Coastal Cluster (“inside” venues in Gangneung City). The Ceremonies will be held in the Olympic Stadium in Hoenggye (HG) in the mountain area. While PyeongChang (PC) is officially the host city of the Games, there are no venues or other OL-related activity in that city of 15,000. Visitors staying in PC City will be surprised to find that it will take them at least 30 - 60 minutes to reach any of the Mountain Cluster (MC) or other venue sites. The “real” host city for the MC is HG, site of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, an even smaller city. It is 6 to 10 miles from the closest MC venues (Alpensia, Yongyeong, Phoenix).

The host city for the Coastal Cluster (CC) is Gangneung (GNG), a city of around 220,000. GNG is the eastern terminus of Highway 50, the beautiful new expressway that goes from the Seoul/Incheon metro to the East coast. The areas surrounding GNG are beautiful. That said, GNG City is a gritty provincial town with limited services and, oddly for its size, offers no major brand hotels. Driving north up the coast of the East Sea from GNG, however, there are numerous resorts of varying sizes and quality. GNG is about 50 miles from the North Korean border. GNG is pronounced “KANG – NUN”. Get a map.

### Access:

Incheon Airport (ICN), the new facility for the Seoul/Incheon metro (~25,000,000, half the country’s population) and is regarded by many as the best airport in the world, glittering and modern with every amenity travelers could want. Eventually, travelers will be able to leave their plane, get their baggage and walk directly to the new KTX high-speed rail station in the airport. The KTX, with speeds up to 250KM/hr is expected to be only a 90-minute trip from ICN to GNG, with a stop north of PC on the way. The new track system is finished, and that train is expected to debut in December. Regional busses from ICN take 3 ½ hours under ideal traffic conditions. Traffic during the Games? Anyone’s guess.

GNG is about 35 minutes to the closest MC venue, Alpensia (AP), again that depends on traffic. Park-and-Ride services between GNG and the MC will be available, but costs and access limitations have yet to be announced. How close will rental cars be allowed? Unknown.

Rental cars can be an answer, with rates resembling that of the US. Remember! You need an International Drivers License (IDL) to rent and drive a rental in Korea. Left-hand driving (US). Roads and signage in Korea are uniformly good-to-great. Parking in Korea is haphazard, a real nuisance everywhere.

### People/Culture:

Korea is one of the most advanced nations on the globe. 50MM people. Highest cell phones-per-capita in the world. Cutting-edge technology on everything from transportation to toilets (“what are all of those buttons for . . . oops”). A very urban culture. South Koreans are friendlier and more accepting than the folks of other Asian nations. They have a good sense of humor and like Americans. This is a very traveler-friendly nation. Seoul is a sophisticated city with lots of English-speakers. However, GNG is much more of a challenge language-wise. Away from Seoul, Koreans learn to read English, but struggle speaking it. While non-threatening, you can go an entire day without seeing a Western face in GNG. Getting an answer to a question is problematic. Learn the words “kamsa-hamnida” (thank you) and “anneyo haseyo” (an all-encompassing phrase that will cover “hello”, “good bye” and “whassup?”), and that can go a long way. I never had a (real) problem. This is a health and fitness culture. And, you will find Koreans to be very polite, but a bit impatient and pushy. You’ll like ‘em.

### **Lodging:**

CC or MC area? “Down” or “Up”? It all depends on what you want to do. Get a local map ASAP!! Or sooner. I checked several hotels and condos around the MC and found “all full”. I did find more potential options around the CC, including “motels” and especially in the northern coastal vacation villas. Uneven quality. AirBnb has some choices, but VRBO and HomeAway have nothing. No classified ads in local papers. Calling on the phone is difficult. Finding a local dual-speaker is a major help, although it may cost you a beer or a soju (rice wine). I am staying “down” in a private flat. Do not stay in PC because it will be so far from anything you want to do. PC City promotion paints the City as another Vail or Breckenridge. PC is about as close to Vail as a John Deere is to a Ferrari.

### **Services:**

There are convenience stores (CU, 7/11, GS 25) and coffee shops everywhere. With one exception (Emart), food stores are small, tend to be more specialty shops with limited selection. Toilets are commonly available and much less of the “squat” type in urban areas than 15 years ago. But, be prepared and plan ahead. Gas stations are plentiful, and are sometimes self-serve and sometimes not. Gas is around \$6/gallon and the stations usually have decent toilets.

### **Food:**

I have always loved (most of) the Korean cuisine, but it can be a challenge to first-timers. Suggestion: Try some at home in a local restaurant to get a sense of it. It is generally spicier than what you are used to but there are milder choices. Learn the Hangul (see below) characters for “beef”, “pork”, “chicken”, “seafood” and “rice”, and it will save you a lot of uncertainty. Westerners tend to prefer “kalbi” (grilled/sliced beef or pork;” bulgogi” (boiled veggies, sometimes with meat, usually beef); grilled “porkbelly”, or “bibimbap” (rice with veggies in a hot bowl, yummy). Those four can satisfy even the pickiest eater. Remember: Nobody anywhere likes food that tastes bad. It may look funky, but it usually tastes fine. If the sound of some choice turns you off (baby octopus, pig intestines), you will likely find that it tastes just fine, although it might be a bit tricky to eat. Chopsticks everywhere, of course, but you can request fork/knife in some places. Many Westerners fall into the trap of having hamburgers or club sandwiches for every meal. What a waste!! Now, there are all kinds of chains (McD’s, Paris Baguette, Lotteria, coffee shops etc.) if you need it. But, you are missing out of something special. You will not regret being adventurous.

### **Language:**

“Korean” is the spoken language. “Hangul” is the written language. Millennia ago, like the Japanese, Koreans emigrated from Manchuria and Northern China, so there are a lot of similarities in the spoken languages. However, seven hundred years ago, a very smart king decided that written Chinese (picture words) was way too hard for normal, semi-educated people to learn. So, he sponsored the invention of a new written language based on phonetics, like Western languages, and this is called Hangul. Consisting of 40 symbols, or “letters”, it is remarkably easy to learn, just like “A, B, C, D” each with a single associated sound. Will that help you in your three-week visit to Korea? No. But, do get one of the language guides (i.e., Berlitz) that will allow you to at least say the right words for something you need.

### **Pins and Memorabilia:**

None are visible yet in stores or gift shops. None. And, there is virtually no visible advertising or promotion of the Games anywhere but the MC. None in GNG or even Seoul/Incheon. Disappointing. The huge Olympic Plaza that runs through the center of the hotel complex at Alpensia promises to be an ideal pin trading location (think Whistler in Vancouver times three). The CC in GNG is much smaller and there was no ‘natural’ plaza area evident yet. The four venue buildings are gathered around a grassy athletic field which promises to be muddy in winter. The only Coke “tent” will be somewhere here. Sources indicate that Coke will not be making their normal array of pins for these Games. Too bad.

Have a great time at the Games!!

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*For additional helpful information about the PyeongChang 2018 Olympics, refer to [www.teamusa.org/pyeongchang-2018-olympic-winter-games/games-info](http://www.teamusa.org/pyeongchang-2018-olympic-winter-games/games-info), which includes the official competition schedule along with details about the venues and about buying tickets. For information about attending the Games go to [www.medium.com/road-to-pyeoongchang](http://www.medium.com/road-to-pyeoongchang). Also Google this article: *Ultimate Guide to PyeongChang 2018: Everything you need to know about travel times to the venues.**





## Two Games in less than two weeks – are you crazy?

by Ron Finnigan

Earlier this year, I was faced with a dilemma. I had received a \$600 voucher from a large unnamed American Airline because of a six-day delay in getting to Rio, including 2.5 days on standby in JFK. My story is known by many and is part of what makes up this hobby and the travel typically associated with it. Stuff happens!

So, keeping in mind that my voucher had to be used by September, I started looking at the calendar to see what small regional games I might attend. Collecting pins from smaller regional games has been a passion of mine for a long time although I hadn't really attended many except for a few Commonwealth Games and the Toronto 2015 Pan Am Games. Originally scheduled for Saint Lucia, the 2017 Commonwealth Youth Games were relocated to the Bahamas in late 2016 because of a large fire in Saint Lucia that resulted in their national stadium becoming unavailable for use. I'd never been to the Caribbean so I used my voucher to book a five-day trip to Nassau, Bahamas.

The other part of this venture relates to the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Canada Games that were to open in Winnipeg on the Friday right after the games in the Bahamas closed. I've been collecting Canada Games pins since 1989, and there was no way I'd miss these. For those of you not familiar, the Commonwealth Youth Games are a developmental

games held every four years in the year prior to the Commonwealth Games, along the lines of the Youth Olympic Games. The Canada Games are a multi-sport games for elite level junior athletes (13 to 20 years of age typically) held every two years, alternating winter and summer, similar to the Olympics.

On the morning I was to fly to Nassau, I received an email from that same unnamed American Airline stating that my flight to Miami had been cancelled and that I'd been rebooked to the following morning, meaning I would miss the Opening Ceremony. Sound familiar? I finally did arrive in Nassau a day late and immediately immersed myself in chasing down all the team pins. Most of the Caribbean teams had Games specific pins, many made by our good friends at Laurie Artiss – The Pin People. (See attached pictures.) The teams were all staying in three large resort type hotels to the west of the downtown core so that is where I started my trading. Wouldn't you know it? I'm only on the hotel property for 10 minutes and am asked to leave...nicely...by a large security guy. Anyone heard this story before? As a result, I had to fine tune my trading strategy a bit. I ended up doing a bit of volunteer work for the host committee as an NOC assistant, which included riding shuttle buses in and around Nassau, and that proved very worthwhile. Nothing beats trading pins on a bus flying through the back roads of Nassau with reggae music beating full blast out of an athlete's ghetto blaster. Outside of the venues also proved great for trading, especially at the athletics venue where all the Caribbean nations' pins were readily available. I was the only real trader at these Games and ended up coming home with a small but very nice collection.

Once back in Toronto, I played catch up for three days at work where I'm a project engineer on the new TTC Toronto Transit subway extension. And then, four days after getting back from the Bahamas, I boarded a flight to Winnipeg for the Canada Games. Pin trading is front and centre at the Canada Games, with athletes there representing all ten provinces and thirteen territories. Most teams typically have three to five team pins. Throw in host committee pins, retail pins, and sponsor pins, and most Canada Games will produce between 100 and 150 pins. Laurie Artiss – The Pin People are the official Canada Games pin licensee and always do a great job on these pins and on their detailed pin guide. For these Games, they produced all the retail pins and host committee pins, and most of the team and sponsor pins...or so I thought. What I discovered upon arrival was that the host committee also had gone out on its own and produced an additional 65-pin sponsor set, one for each Games sponsor, in very limited quantities of 100 each. This was in addition to the pins the sponsors had had Artiss make. So, I now had an additional 65 pins to track down in six days! Luckily, I was there with fellow Olympin member John Dyck from Vancouver. He focused on team pins at the Athlete's Village while I crisscrossed Winnipeg in pursuit of sponsor pins. Together we came very close to success and only missed finding six of them.

All things considered, my travels to the two events went really well and many great pins were added to my collection. The subway extension? It is going to open the middle of December, likely about the time that you read this article.

## **UPDATE: Los Angeles 2018 24<sup>th</sup> World Olympic Collectors' Fair (WOCF)**

Next year's World Olympic Collectors' Fair will be held in Los Angeles, California. The dates of the 3-day event and main venue will be announced shortly. We hope that many of you – especially those on the West Coast – will join us for this annual Olympic extravaganza.

Co-produced by the Olympin Collectors Club and Sports Philatelists International, there will be a bourse of dealers from around the world in Olympic memorabilia, pins, numismatics, and philately. The show's organizing committee is planning some exciting activities which are expected to include a tour of Los Angeles Olympic venues, special evening reception, silent auction, banquet, and Olympian autograph sessions.

**Look for more details in a save-the-date eBlast very soon!**