



St. Albert, Alberta chosen to host 2012 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games

TORONTO, ON, December 1, 2009 – Special Olympics Canada announced today that St. Albert, Alberta will host the seventh national winter competition in February 2012.

Joined by Special Olympics athletes, Mayor Nolan Crouse and municipal employees at the morning conference, Sharon Bollenbach, vice-president of sport at Special Olympics Canada, said: “Special Olympics Canada would like to congratulate the City of St. Albert and the 2012 Bid Committee on its excellent bid. They demonstrated a strong commitment to delivering an athlete-centred Games’ experience to the hundreds of athletes, their coaches and families, who will come together in 2012 for this national winter competition.”

More than 700 athletes, coaches, and mission staff, representing all ten provinces and Yukon and Northwest Territories, are expected to gather for this multi-sport competition in the province’s oldest community, conveniently located next to Edmonton. Athletes will compete in seven sports, including alpine skiing, cross country skiing, curling, figure skating, floor hockey, speed skating and snowshoeing.

“We are absolutely thrilled at being chosen as the host city for the 2012 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games,” said St. Albert Mayor Nolan Crouse. “St. Albert has a solid reputation for hosting many cultural and sporting events, including the 2009 Special Olympics Alberta Summer Games. With our sports amenities and strong commitment by community members, we are ready to make the 2012 games a time for many athletes, coaches and attendees to enjoy and remember.” The 2009 provincial summer competition attracted more than 850 athletes and 300 volunteers and supporters from across Alberta.

Alberta was appointed the host chapter for these games earlier this year with a bid process beginning in June 2009. Three formal bids were submitted by Edmonton, St. Albert and a partnership lead by Leduc and including Beaumont, Devon and Wetaskiwin. All were then evaluated by a review committee of staff and volunteer representatives from Special Olympics Canada and Special Olympics Alberta.

“With exceptional winter games facilities, any of these communities would have been an excellent choice for hosting this national winter competition, said John Pinsent, chair of the Special Olympics Alberta Board of Directors. “We only had one games to award.”

These games are a partnership between the City of St. Albert, Special Olympics Alberta and Special Olympics Canada as well as the qualifying event for athletes to become members of the national team that will compete at the 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games.

Future announcements will include the appointment of a Games Organizing Committee, final dates and venue selections.

About Special Olympics Canada

Celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2009, Special Olympics Canada is dedicated to enriching the lives of Canadians with an intellectual disability through sport. It is a national not-for-profit organization that provides training and competition opportunities to more than 34,000 athletes of all ages and abilities through local sport clubs and benefits from an extensive network of 16,000 volunteers, including 10,000 trained coaches. For more information, please visit www.specialolympics.ca.

About Special Olympics Alberta

Special Olympics Alberta is an accredited chapter of Special Olympics Canada. Within Alberta, approximately 3,000 athletes participate in programs with the help of more than 1,500 volunteers in 114 communities. For more information visit www.specialolympics.ab.ca

About St. Albert

St. Albert, Alberta is a picturesque and active city of over 58,000 residents. Located just north of Edmonton, St. Albert is known for its outstanding sports and cultural amenities, including: the Red Willow Park and trail system; the world-renowned Arden Theatre; Riel Recreation Park; and Servus Credit Union Place, the largest multipurpose recreation facility in western Canada. The city also has a reputation for hosting outstanding events, such as: the Northern Alberta International Children's Festival; the 2009 Alberta Special Olympics Summer Games; and the upcoming Alberta 55 Plus Winter Games in 2011. For more information on the City of St. Albert, please visit www.stalbert.ca

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