

**ART GABOR'S ACCEPTANCE SPEECH
FOR
PETE PALANGIO SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR
AWARD 2007**

FIRST OF ALL I WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE THE INDUCTEES 2008, AND WINNERS OF AWARDS!

TO GET MY TEACHING CERTIFICATE I ENROLLED IN THE ONTARIO COLLEGE OF EDUCATION. WHILE THERE I MET THE ATHLETES IN ALL SPORTS. I LEARNED QUICKLY THAT I HAD TO BE KNOWLEDGEABLE IN MOST SPORTS. I WAS HIRED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION FROM KIRKLAND LAKE. THAT YEAR I COACHED FOOTBALL, BASKETBALL, GYMNASTICS AND TRACK AND FIELD. I WAS LUCKY THAT I HAD HELP FROM FRIENDS AND INSTRUCTORS AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL. I LEARNED FROM THIS EXPERIENCE THAT I WOULD NEED A LIBRARY OF COACHING MANUALS AND WOULD NEED TO ATTEND QUALITY CLINICS IN SPORTS.

THE NEXT YEAR MAJOR LEO TROY ASKED ME TO TEACH AT MY OLD SCHOOL NBC & VS. DURING MY STAY, MY TRACK TEAM WON THE NOSSA IN TIMMINS AND IT WAS THRILLING FOR THE MAJOR'S SENIOR FOOTBALL AND MY JUNIOR FOOTBALL TEAM TO WIN THE NOSSA.

THEN I MOVED TO CHIPPEWA CONTINUING WITH SUCCESS IN FOOTBALL, BASKETBALL AND MOST SPORTS. OF COURSE, WE STARTED THE TOMAHAWK BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT. RECENTLY, WE CELEBRATED THE 50TH TOMAHAWK BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT, WHICH WAS A HUGE SUCCESS. I WAS OVERWHELMED WITH THE ATTENTION AND HONOUR THAT I RECEIVED.

I OWE SO VERY MUCH TO SO MANY: CO-CONVENER TIM SIMPSON, THE PRINCIPAL, THE DIRECTOR, AND SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION OF THE NEAR NORTH SCHOOL BOARD, THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, THE MAYOR, ALL OUR SPONSORS, THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY TOMAHAWK COMMITTEE, THE PLAYERS, THE COACHES, THE PARENTS, THE FANS, THE POSTER MAKERS, THE WORKERS, THE TABLE OFFICIALS, THE NORTH BAY BOARD OF OFFICIATING, THE SITE CO-ORDINATORS, THE PHOTOGRAPHERS, MY TWO NIECES LISA LEE J. MEDVEDUKE AND MYRA MAY MEDVEDUKE. AND THE WONDERFUL PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF NORTH BAY.

A FEW YEARS AGO I MARRIED INTO A FAMILY OF SKIERS. THEY GOT ME INTERESTED IN OFFICIATING THE NANCY GREENE RACES. NIPISSING RIDGE WAS IN FULL SWING. NOT TOO LONG AFTER MY SKIER SONS BEGAN TO INTEREST ME IN IMPROVING MY SKIING ABILITY. KELLY TAUGHT ME STANCE, POISE AND MAKING ALL SORTS OF TURNS. BARCLAY, MORGAN AND KEVIN TAUGHT ME EXCITING RACING. THAT PERIOD IN MY LIFE WAS VERY ENJOYABLE BECAUSE THE WHOLE FAMILY WENT SKIING. I WENT TO SKI MEETS BECAUSE THE BOYS WERE ON THE RACING TEAM. I WAS VERY HAPPY TO WIN THE GOLD IN QUITE A FEW MOLSTAR RACES. AFTER RETIRING, I JOINED THE SKI PATROL, MAINLY AT MOUNT ANTOINE IN MATTAWA.

I WOULD LIKE TO HONOUR JEAN AND TERRY EDWARDS! JEAN WAS MY PARTNER ON THE SKI PATROL. TERRY WAS A PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTOR FOR ALL AGE GROUPS. JEAN, THANK YOU FOR YOUR GUIDANCE AND TIPS ABOUT SKI PATROLLING AND TERRY THANK YOU FOR IMPROVING MY TECHNIQUE AND ABILITY TO SKI WITH CONFIDENCE. GOD BLESS YOU BOTH!

ABOUT 40 YEARS AGO I GOT INVOLVED WITH THE LEGION TRACK CLUB. A LOT OF GOOD ATHLETES CAME THROUGH THE CLUB. QUITE A FEW RECEIVED AWARDS IN THE SPORTS HALL OF FAME.

THREE YEARS AGO THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE LEGION WAS TO START AT THE GRASS ROOTS AND BUILD FROM THERE. THAT YEAR WE GOT 45 MEDALS AT THE DISTRICT H TRACK MEET. THE NEXT YEAR WE GOT 62 MEDALS, AND THIS LAST YEAR WE GOT 106 MEDALS IN NORTH BAY.

BY THE WAY, WE AT THE LEGION DON'T WANT TO FORGET THE OUTSTANDING ATHLETES WHO WENT THROUGH OUR RANKS.

WE WILL RECALL FORMER COACHES, ADMINISTRATORS FOR THE LEGION TRACK CLUB AS WELL AS LEGION PEOPLE, TO FORM A COMMITTEE TO SELECT AND CONTACT WORTHY ATHLETES TO WRITE THEIR BIOGRAPHIES AND TRACK AND FIELD ACHIEVEMENTS. THESE WILL BE AVAILABLE IN A HISTORICAL LIBRARY FOR PERUSAL BY ATHLETES AT ANY TIME.

MY FIRST LOVE WAS HOCKEY AS A YOUNGSTER. I ALSO HAD THE BIG CANADIAN DREAM TO BE IN THE N.H.L. MY FATHER BUILT ME A RINK IN THE YARD WITH GOALS, LINES AND WATERED BANKS. HE PUT LIGHTS UP SO THAT ALL MY FRIENDS COULD COME AND PLAY HOCKEY AT NIGHT. MY FIRST SUPER ORGANIZED LEAGUE WAS CARL PALANGIO'S ACT MIDGET HOCKEY. OUR TEAM WAS THE BLACKHAWKS. WE WON THE CHAMPIONSHIP. A HOCKEY SCOUT FROM TORONTO MET WITH MY FATHER AND TRIED TO SIGN ME UP WITH THE "C FORM". MY FATHER SAID "NO. EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT AND HOCKEY CAN BE PLAYED AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL".

I HAD A SUCCESSFUL CAREER IN HOCKEY AT THE SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL, ALSO AT WESTERN UNIVERSITY AND IN TORONTO WITH VARSITY BABY BLUES AND IN LONDON WITH THE SENIOR A CLUB.

I WON QUITE A FEW SCORING CHAMPIONSHIPS IN MY CAREER. SPEAKING ABOUT SCORING, PETE RANDLE, JIM RANDLE DAVE BRENNAN AND I WENT TO A NATIONAL HOCKEY CAMP AND CLINIC IN KINGSTON. CARL BREWER & JACQUES PLANTE WERE THERE AS INSTRUCTORS. WE HAD AN INTER-SQUAD, NORTHERN ONTARIO VS SOUTHERN ONTARIO. WE HAD CARL BREWER AND JACQUES PLANTE ON OUR TEAM. THE OTHER TEAM HAD THE KINGSTON ACES AND MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL TEAM. NORTHERN ONTARIO WON!! AFTER THE GAME I TALKED TO JACQUES PLANTE AND CONGRATULATED HIM FOR OUR VICTORY. ALSO, I ASKED HIM FOR A FAVOUR, A LIFETIME AMBITION!! I SAID THAT THE NHL WAS BEYOND MY GRASP, SO WOULD HE LET ME START AT THE OPPOSITE END, ROUND THE NET, SKATE WITH SPEED AND "SWIVEL HIPS" SHIFTS, GO TO HIS GOAL, GO LEFT - PULLING HIM OUT OF HIS NET- THEN GO RIGHT AND

BACKHAND THE PUCK INTO THE RIGHT UPPER CORNER!! HE SAID FINE IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER!! I DID IT!! I THANKED HIM FOR THE FANTASTIC THRILL! I ALSO SAID THAT I DID NOT NEED THE NHL, BECAUSE SCORING THAT MEMORABLE GOAL FULFILLED MY PAST DESIRES AND NHL DREAMS, REPLACING THEM WITH A FEELING OF SATISFACTION AND ACCOMPLISHMENT. I WILL CHERISH THE KINDNESS AND HELP BY THE GREAT LEGENDARY JACQUES PLANTE!!

PETE PALANGIO WAS MY IDOL, AS HE WAS FOR ALL HOCKEY PLAYERS IN NORTH BAY. I PATTERNED MY HOCKEY PLAYING AFTER PETE PALANGIO'S IDEALS, PRINCIPLES AND PERSONALITY. I WAS A TEAM PLAYER, CONSIDERED ASSISTS BETTER THAN GOALS AND WAS A LEADER IN GOOD AND BAD TIMES.

A WELL-READ FRIEND OF MINE SAID "TO BE SUCCESSFUL, SURROUND YOURSELF WITH INTELLIGENT, DEDICATED AND RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE WITH INTEGRITY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND A WORK ETHIC. HE ALSO SAID TO BE CAREFUL OF YOUR EGO BECAUSE IT MIGHT DIRECT YOUR GOALS AND VALUES IN THE WRONG DIRECTION. HE SAID THAT GIVING HELP AND CARING FOR PEOPLE COULD BE REWARDING TO ONE'S SOUL AND MAKE-UP. THE GIVER, THE RECEIVER AND THE OBSERVER ALL BENEFIT FROM THE ENTIRE ACTION." WHAT A LESSON THAT COULD BE FOR A FAMILY WITH GROWING CHILDREN!

MY AWARD WILL BE PRESENTED LAST ON THE PROGRAM. USUALLY THE FINAL PRESENTATION IS CONSIDERED THE BEST! THE 'PETE PALANGIO SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR' AWARD IS A CHERISHED AND VALUED AS THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS TROPHY OF ALL IN THE 'SPORTS HALL OF FAME!! SO DO I!!

AS I REFLECT ABOUT THE AWARD I AM RECEIVING, I THINK ABOUT THE MANY PEOPLE IN THE HALL OF FAME WHO CONTRIBUTED TO MY SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS. THEY ALL KNOW WHO THEY ARE!!

THEREFORE, IT IS AN HONOUR AND A PLEASURE TO SHARE THE LEGENDARY PETE PALANGIO SPORTSMAN AWARD 2007 WITH THEM.

IN CLOSING I WISH TO INFORM YOU THAT I HAVE HAD A ROUGH TIME WITH MY HEALTH IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS. RECEIVING THE PRESTIGIOUS "MR. HOCKEY" PETE PALANGIO AWARD FOR SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR 2007 FROM MEMBERS OF THE SPORTS HALL OF FAME COMMITTEE HAS REVITALIZED AND INSPIRED ME TO FIGHT MY AILMENTS AND GET BACK TO HELPING MY LEGION TRACK KIDS.

THANK YOU. AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL!!