

Special Olympics program planned

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Looking for a means to either get or keep active this winter, well volunteering one's time to assist with the development of a Special Olympics program could provide the answer. Efforts are under way to organize a program for the Nipawin area and coaches along with people willing to serve on a steering committee are being recruited. Hugh MacDonald, the manager of Handi-Works, is spearheading initiatives to introduce bowling, snow shoeing, cross country skiing and floor hockey into a program for those with a mental disability.

"It's not a Handi-Works program, it's meant for the whole district. It's just that we know there is some interest here (at Handi-Works), so it's a place to start," said MacDonald.

"Basically it's just a way to get people out to have some fun, to get them away from just sitting around in front of the TV," said MacDonald.

The Special Olympics is an international program that encourages those with mental disabilities to get involved with physical activities. It started years ago with floor

hockey and since has grown to where there are now competitions at the international level for both summer and winter sports.

Jerry Anderson is a well known local athlete who has competed at the Special Olympics. Last winter he brought home two gold medals and one silver for his speed skating performances at the Austrian winter games.

"Competing at the provincial, national and international

levels are fine, but that's not our purpose here. It's just to get these people involved, to get them out and have some fun," said MacDonald.

About two dozen people who the program would benefit have been talked to so far.

"We know there are other people out there that will participate once they hear about it," said MacDonald.

Anyone interested in more information can contact MacDonald at 862-2270.



Jerry Anderson is a local athlete who has competed at the international level with the Special Olympics program.