As we begin another season of the greatest sport in the world, there are a number of high points we can look back upon from the 2012-2013 season, as well as a number of areas where we could do better as clubs and as an LSC of USA Swimming. One item we all need to remember is the mission and vision for the Niagara LSC:

- **Our Mission:** To develop and improve the swimming knowledge and achievement of our membership by providing superior educational and competitive programs.
- **Our Vision:** Deliver quality opportunities for our membership to attain the highest level of achievement in the sport of competitive swimming.

1. The 2012 Olympics has again had a significant impact on our membership by showcasing swimming with so much more publicity and focus on our sport. Nationally and here in Niagara, athlete membership grew by over 13%. However, the number of individual times uploaded into the SWIMS times’ database during this period increased by only 1.3%; representing 5,231 or 81% of our 6,478 registered athletes.

2. At the Eastern Zone level, Niagara will be the hosting the;
   - 2014 Speedo Championship Series Short Course Region 1 (North), March 20-23
   - 2014 Short Course Age Group Championship, March 27-29
   - 2014 Speedo Championship Series Long Course, March 27-30
   - 2014 Speedo Championship Series Long Course “Super Sectional”, July 24-27
   
   That is quite impressive as we continue to give our athletes the best competition that the zone has to offer. Thank you to those clubs that are hosting, since I realize the magnitude of what it takes to host these types of meets. We continue to be the front runner within the Eastern Zone as these clubs offer their expertise and volunteers.

3. We sent a total of 88 athletes to the Eastern Zone Short Course Age Group Championship at an average cost of $62 per athlete and placed 5th, just falling short of Allegheny Mountain for 4th place. At the Eastern Zone Long Course Age Group Championship, we sent only 44 athletes at an average cost of $396 per athlete and placed 10th out of the 11 LSC’s participating. The net expense of almost $23,000 to the LSC for these two meets in 2013 represents over 11% of our total expenses.

4. Reimbursement for senior swimming travel and club strengthening has continued its downward trend. The 2012-2013 actual reimbursements totaled $21,850 and $10,633 respectively, versus budgeted amounts of $32,000 and 27,500. One bright note is that over $1,800 was provided in support of our Outreach athletes.

5. We recently completed our Level I LSC Evaluation & Achievement Program renewal for the new quad. Some may wonder "why do we have to do this?" The answer is that it is important to be sure we are in compliance but it is even more important to do more than "what we always do." Ask yourselves:
   - What can we do to get better?
   - How can we provide better services to our members?
   - What can we learn from other LSCs?
6. This year marked the 10th USA Swimming Annual Convention which I have had the privilege of going to, and below are a number of the meetings I attended along with just a few important highlights:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Committee/Meeting</th>
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<tr>
<td>LSC Safe Sport Chair Workshop</td>
<td>Audit Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWIMS Times Module Workshop</td>
<td>Eastern Zone LSC General Chairs’ Audit Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scholastic All America Subcommittee</td>
<td>Administrative Official: The Who, What &amp; Where</td>
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<td>Eastern Zone Coaches’ Summit</td>
<td>Eastern Zone House of Delegates</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Board of Review Certification</td>
<td>LSC Leadership Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Board of Review Certification</td>
<td>USA Swimming House of Delegates</td>
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- Safe Sport continues to be a major emphasis of USA Swimming and they are very hopeful that our 12 to 18 year old athletes and all parents will take the free athlete protection training available on the USA Swimming web site: [http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1960&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en](http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1960&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en)
- The USA Swimming House of Delegates approved legislative item R-15, Replace LSC Boards of Review with Zone Boards of Review, with an effective date of January 1, 2015.
- The USA Swimming House of Delegates approved a dues increase for athlete and non-athlete members of $2 per year for a period of ten (10) years beginning with the 2015 membership year.

7. As always, the Niagara LSC and its Board of Directors needs your continued support and participation. I am hopeful a few more individuals will step forward to be elected and assist in the day-to-day running of the LSC.

Welcome to all of our new Niagara HOD representatives, and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Bowen, Niagara General Chair