

MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Louie Labbe

by Past President Jamie Rennie

In the summer of 1989 I started working as a Slide Attendant at the Newton Wave Pool in the City of Surrey. It was there that I first met Louie Labbe as he was the Facility Manager and I was starting out in recreation over 27 years ago.



For Louie it started much earlier than that, in fact, many of you reading this were probably not even born at the time...I certainly wasn't. In 1967 Louie started at the North Surrey Recreation Centre as an Iceman with the Civic Properties Commission. Over the next 37 years Louie would stay in recreation in Surrey holding a number of positions but always staying close to the Arenas. In 1999 I had worked my way through Surrey and ended up in a position reporting to Louie as he was the Manager of Arena Operations. We shared an office at the Surrey Sport and Leisure Complex for a number of years where we had very similar expectations regarding the staff; work hard and get your job done. Maybe even a little "old school" but it worked.

In 1973 the Newton Arena was opened and Louie was the first Arena Supervisor at that facility. It was then that he discovered the RFABC and started to attend Zone Meetings. During this time he met many colleagues that became his friends and are still his friends to this day. The likes of Dick Irving, John Bates, Ken Kelbough and many more. These were some of the guys that laid the ground work for the RFABC and created the history that we have today. It was with these guys that Louie attended his first Convention in Revelstoke and one that he will never forget. Not because of the location but it was because of how they got there...riding the rails. Yes they took a train and I believe they had an entire coach to themselves.

Louie held a number of positions within the RFABC including Zone Chair, Education Chair, 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President and finally the President in 1994-1995. But that wasn't it, in 2001-2002 he was elected President of the RFABC at the joint conference in Jasper which was hosted by the RFABC and the AARP. Two of Louie's most memorable moments with the RFABC. ■