

2008 Bachelor of Business Administration graduate Lesley Dovichak writes about life in Vancouver-Whistler the week the Olympics begin:

It's early February, the middle of winter and there is no snow in Vancouver!

No snow in the city hosting the Winter Games! Coincidence, probably not thanks to El Nino.



Even with the lack of snow and mild weather, the excitement that the Opening Ceremonies (on February 12th) are days away is building; workers and volunteers can be seen all over Vancouver and Whistler suited in our blue uniforms, the venues are ready for competition and the city is draped with elements of the games, Cultural Olympiad events are in full swing and many of the free pavilions are set up and ready to go, and I am so excited to be here in the middle of it all.

In addition to my Asset Management responsibilities, part of my role during the Olympics and Para's will be to man the "Logistics Service Desks" at the Villages and Media Centers in Vancouver and Whistler.

Vancouver media village a cushy spot

My first shift in that capacity was at the Main Press and International Broadcast Center (MPC and IBC) which is located at Canada Place.

The day was relatively quiet as only a few of the press covering the Games had arrived and spent most of the day listing to sea planes flying in and out of the harbour while working on my regular duties.

Overlay transformed the large space under the big white sails into a while new space.

Temporary walls had been set up creating private office spaces. There is a large open section with drop locations for media to write stories and watch all the live sporting action on several TV's. There is even an entire McDonalds set up to service the media! And what wouldn't be better than receiving free 15 minute massages from RMT's after writing stories for hours each day.

I have been told the media literally 'move in' to the press center and almost never leave so the venue team tries to have as many amenities available as possible.

The following weekend I had another shift at the Vancouver Village; what an exciting place to be! Some team's National Olympic Committees (NOC's) and athletes had started to arrive and adorn their residences with their paraphernalia.

Team Canada has set up a Moose! The buildings look great and the location is fantastic; right on the water at False Creek with easy access to down town by 2 different sky train lines or the water taxies that look like mini tug boats transporting passengers along False Creek. This village was built to meet Platinum energy efficient standards. The energy around the area is infectious and I know it will grow in the next few days as the remaining athletes and officials arrive in Vancouver.

The torch run and thoughts on Whistler

Last week I spent a few days at the Whistler Olympic Village helping to finalize rooms for team check in's ensuring everything they requested was present. I know the athletes are going to really enjoy their 'home away from home'.



The Whistler Village was a hub of bustling activity too. Police from all over the country are on patrol 24/7 and accreditation is in effect, employees and volunteers, dubbed as 'smurf's' from our head to toe blue uniforms littered the village premise from all corners. Staff just finished hoisting all the country's flags that are here competing. The meal services haven't been that bad either.

On Friday Feb. 5, my director Kevin DuCharme was running with the Olympic Torch outside Brackendale, just north of Squamish. (Back in October, 30 VANOC staff were randomly drawn for a once in a lifetime opportunity to run with the torch.)

After months of anticipation, Kevin's day was finally here!) The rest of the LOG team (for those who were able to join), loaded a school bus and traveled to Brackendale to cheer Kevin on.

Everyone was wearing red and white, adorned with Canada flags and temporary tattoos on our cheeks with home make signs and torches. As Kevin stepped off the bus, we all were snapping pictures and filming the moment when the flame was passed to his torch and he ran his 300 m trek.

To be that close to the Olympic Flame that has traveled from Olympia, Greece and across Canada and share a special moment with those I have been working so close with over the past 8 months, put into perspective that the Olympic Games are here and I am immensely honoured to be a part of it all.

First-hand view: Opening Ceremonies

Tue. night, employees, volunteers and their family and friends got a sneak peak of the torch at a small event at our office.

On Wed. evening, we get the opportunity to see one of the final Dress Rehearsals for the Opening Ceremonies and I know it's going to be amazing!



I am off to Whistler tomorrow for another leg of shifts at the service desks and am thrilled to have the opportunity to see all the games have to offer. I still pinch myself that I am here helping to organize this worldly event that many have been working hard for years to organize; what a dream come true.

These are truly Canada's Games and it's inspiring to see the pride we have in our athletes and support from the red mittens to the clothing, though out communities on the torch relay and those traveling to Vancouver to take part in the Olympic experience. Go Canada Go!

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For more information about the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games go to www.vancouver2010.com.