

# ***UW-Marathon County Library Restroom Reader***

## **The 2010 Winter Olympics will take place in Vancouver, Canada from February 12-28.**



There are 15 winter sports that will take place.

Alpine skiing, Biathlon, Bobsled, Cross-country skiing, Curling, Figure skating, Freestyle skiing, Ice hockey, Luge, Nordic combined, Short track speed skating, Skeleton, Ski jumping, Snowboarding, and Speed skating.

***Below are some interesting facts about the Olympics and its traditions.***

### **The Olympic Hymn**

The Olympic Hymn, played when the Olympic Flag is raised, was composed by Spyros Samaras and the words added by Kostis Palamas. The Olympic Hymn was first played at the 1896 Olympic Games in Athens but wasn't declared the official hymn by the IOC until 1957.

### **Opening Ceremony Procession Order**

During the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games, the procession of athletes is always led by the Greek team, followed by all the other teams in alphabetical order (in the language of the hosting country), except for the last team which is always the team of the hosting country.

### **The Olympic Flame**

The Olympic flame is a practice continued from the ancient Olympic Games. In Olympia (Greece), a flame was ignited by the sun and then kept burning until the closing of the Olympic Games. The flame first appeared in the modern Olympics at the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam. The flame itself represents a number of things, including purity and the endeavor for perfection.

### **The Official Olympic Flag**

Created by Pierre de Coubertin in 1914, the Olympic flag contains five interconnected rings on a white background. The five rings symbolize the five significant continents and are interconnected to symbolize the friendship to be gained from these international competitions. The rings, from left to right, are blue, yellow, black, green, and red. The colors were chosen because at least one of them appeared on the flag of every country in the world. The Olympic flag was first flown during the 1920 Olympic Games.

### **The Olympic Oath**

Pierre de Coubertin wrote an oath for the athletes to recite at each Olympic Games. During the opening ceremonies, one athlete recites the oath on behalf of all the athletes. The Olympic oath was first taken during the 1920 Olympic Games by Belgian fencer Victor Boin. The Olympic Oath states, "In the name of all competitors, I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules that govern them, in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the glory of sport and the honor of our teams."

### **The Medals**

The Olympic medals are designed especially for each individual Olympic Games by the host city's organizing committee. Each medal must be at least three millimeters thick and 60 millimeters in diameter. Also, the gold and silver Olympic medals must be made out of 92.5 percent silver, with the gold medal covered in six grams of gold.

**These facts were obtained from About.com: 20th Century History**