

NVCAC AGM President's Report for 2019–2020

This has been a challenging, but also very exciting, year for me as President of the Nicola Valley Community Arts Council.

The Mayor's Gala for the Arts gave us a taste of what was possible in our community, as people were energized and excited to be part of such a top-notch event. Our small group of volunteers were tired, but proud of what had been accomplished, and thought another gala could be possible.

February saw us host another highly successful Jazz in the Attic, thanks to the hard work of Jane Bartle and a dedicated group of volunteers.

The slogan we had decided on for the Gala, "Building Community Through the Arts," continues to be something that we strive for. We began by partnering with the City's Recreation Department to advertise our programs in the City's Leisure Guide. It proved to be a great partnership, as programs filled up quickly and everyone was enthusiastic about this endeavour.

We also partnered with Merritt Drum Connection, the Nicola Valley Fibre Arts Group, Merritt Ukulele Club, the Merritt Sparks, and most recently with the Canadian Mental Health Association to provide space and support for their programs.

We continue to have positive relationships with our major financial contributors: the City of Merritt, the TNRD, and the BC Arts Council, and we look forward to building relationships with the United Way, the Interior Community Foundation, and the Vancouver Foundation. We have applied for 3 new grants this year to offer programs, to improve our new program space, and to receive a Covid operating grant. The Vancouver Foundation supplied grants to 4 of our NVCAC members for programs that helped during Covid.

All the momentum that the Board of Directors had gained with collaborations and new programs quickly ground to a halt with the advent of the Corona Virus. The Arts Gallery was closed, as were all other city facilities, and we looked for other ways to offer programs and support. An Urban Sketching program was begun online with Jean Kiegrel and an online Art Show was held.

As the City began to loosen up its guidelines, we were able to slowly open again, but it also began to become clear that things were about to change at our Courthouse home, and we began to look about for other locations for the Arts Gallery. With the help of realtor, Melody Simon, one our directors, we decided on the Jackson Building and the leasing of 3 separate spaces there: one large space for the Gallery/Gift shop, a Program/Artists' space, and a Program/Office Space. The move after 18 years at the Courthouse was a huge job, but again, this little community continued to amaze as so many people pitched in to help.

The renovations to the Jackson building are still underway, but we have settled in quite nicely again with many helping hands painting, sorting, cleaning, and organizing. The large, bright, very professional space has definitely upped our game, and its location has definitely brought many more people into the Gallery than we have ever seen before .

Agenda p 5

Agenda p 5

2019-2020 AGM President's Report

Page 2

The Gallery continues to be a very solid program with many interesting and varied art shows thanks to our director, Jano Howarth

The Artisan gift shop has really taken off in our new location and we have seen many new artisans get involved under the direction of manager Jen Artibise.

Our Newsletter continues to be well received and looked forward to, with the many interesting art items and pictures that Stephanie Kiernan manages to pull together.

Our beautiful Grand Piano continues to be looked after by Cecilia Dyck, who is having a new humidifier installed for it soon.

We continue to look for ways to use our volunteers' time wisely and need to work on the tech side of our organization to streamline our activities, meetings, and programs.

I believe the opportunities for us in our new location are endless, and one program or activity at a time, we will continue to bring new people and volunteers on board.

I am very excited for what this next year could bring to the organization, especially in our collaboration with the City of Merritt on the downtown beautification project and our connection with the Canadian Mental Health Association.

I want to thank my Board of Directors, all the artist., the many volunteers. and Jano, our Gallery Director.

Mischelle Pierce
President
Nicola Valley Community Arts Council