

## Presidents Report for AGM 2023

This year saw the NVCAC continue to thrive fueled by our dedicated Executive, our Directors, Shop volunteers and our many volunteers in general. We continue to make positive changes and improvements to our goal of “Building Community Through the Arts”.

The highlight of the year though was fulfilling our plan to have a strategic plan done for the organization. We have been talking about it for at least 5 years and thankfully it all came together this year. We were able to hire Kerstin Auer to facilitate the plan and we held a directors retreat at The Spences Bridge Inn in March for 2 days and with Kerstins direction we were able to put together a Strategic plan that encompassed everything we were working towards, which included changing our tagline to “Connecting Community through the Arts”, to better reflect our goal of working together with other organizations. We made some tweaks and finalized the plan with Kerstins assistance. Kerstin was absolutely wonderful to work with and as an added bonus she agreed to take on the position of Media Director and she got right to work on the newsletter, social media, and directed a committee to get terms of reference done for each committee. Welcome aboard Kerstin.

This year saw many new initiatives take place and all these are reported in the reports submitted by our team of dedicated volunteers.

We hired Ms Tia Delaney as our Artistic Administrative Director and Tia was an enthusiastic addition to our team. She applied for and was successful in getting a Federal Government grant to hire 2 Summer Students and as you will see from her report was very active in our community with the ART in MOTION trailer. Sadly Tia has moved on to other opportunities but she definitely left her mark and will be missed.

Our Downtown Beautification project really got off the ground this summer with our students completing several major projects, 3 of which still need to be hung in the community. Kari, who has been with us for 3 summers has also moved on to other opportunities and we wish her nothing but the best. Brooklyn Harris will continue with us as Crafty Kids leader and general all around helper. We continue to recruit and look out for young talent to work with and grow their skills as artists and leaders.

Leonard George continued to amaze us with his talents as he completed a stunning Public Art piece on the washrooms at Lions Park, a very visible welcoming piece to Merritt. Leonard also contributed with projects for Indigenous Day, Canada Day in the Park, and with a drum painting project. He is a valuable member of our Arts Team.

We continue to look for new ways to connect with the community and are continuing positive relationships with the City of Merritt, Chamber of Commerce, Nicola Valley Museum and Archives, Love to Dance Society, The Rodeo Association, The Curling Club, Library and most recently the Rotary Club.

Through incredible donations from 2 of our members and the Dance Society's persistence we were able to help them realize their dream of a portable dance floor. As an umbrella for the Arts we continue to support the Community Choir, Merritt Ukulele Club, Merritt Drum Connection, Fibre Arts, and Library painters.

I would like to take this time to thank my Executive, the Directors and the many volunteers who continue to grow this organization. Their many hours of dedication make the Arts Council and in particular the Gallery/Gift Shop a fun and engaging place to be. I would particularly like to thank Kathy Kanda who is stepping down as Program Director for all she has done to make our programs accessible and organized. Thanks to Amanda for stepping in to help with the program committee while we work towards a new Director.

Thanks to Marilyn Kelly who has stepped up to fill the void with Tia leaving. Marilyn is working on organizing our long neglected digital files and has been invaluable on the ToR committee. Last but not least thanks once again to Jano, our Gallery Curator, for continuing to push the envelope with new and innovative shows in the Gallery and continuing to be the face of the NVCAC.