

PORT ARTHUR ROTARY CLUB PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2019/20

Consistent with the club's history, I followed exceptional leaders as President in Vonnie, Brenda and Warren, and was very fortunate to have Krysta as President Elect. Working in the midst of this tradition of excellence provided the impetus to ensure that, as a minimum, I maintained our club's momentum and if possible to accelerate it.

Following is a summary of key issues.

A. Membership

The first was to increase our membership based on our new membership alternatives put in place during Warren's term.

These alternatives were:

1. Individual membership
2. Family membership
3. Community membership.

B. Financial Issue

The second issue was to address a developing financial concern regarding the increasing deficit resulting from lunch meetings expenses exceeding income.

C. Indigenous Strategy

Another important legacy carried forward from Warren's presidency was the slowly developing Indigenous strategy.

D. Pandemic

Let me address each of these in turn.

A. Membership

We were fortunate to have our first community member join in this period.

This was a landmark event, not only because it was our first community member but even more significant was that it was Ft. Severn, our first Indigenous member. One cannot underestimate the importance of that first step.

One bittersweet event was saying goodbye to Maria Hudolin who moved to British Columbia. A long term member and major contributor Maria is thankfully staying very much in touch with us.

B. Financial issue

In regard to addressing our financial issue we established criteria on which alternative meeting locations could be assessed. The intent was to find an alternative meeting site at a cost where the club was not subsidizing each meeting. We established assessment criteria including meal quality, meal and meeting room cost, location, parking, space, accessibility and available technology.

Over subsequent months we held meeting in different locations such as Daytona's, Five Forks South, Baggage Building. We also discussed our cost issue with management at the Prince Arthur but it was evident there was no cost reduction available there.

Unfortunately before we could make a final decision the pandemic hit and in-person meetings stopped. This is still an outstanding issue when in-person meetings resume.

C. Indigenous Strategy

The initial step in regard to this strategy was to provide educational and learning experiences for our members.

The highlight of this was a presentation by Wendy Landry on the history of Indigenous nations in the northwest and treaties in place. This provided excellent learning for our members.

Before turning to our response to the pandemic there were a few other key steps taken.

In regard to Rotary Radio Days we put in place a structure akin to the president- president elect model.

Bill Ulakovic, prior year chair agreed to stay on and Brian Walmark stepped up to become the designated lead, learning and working closely with Bill. This provided excellent learning and was an important transitional step.

In regard to Canada Club, all clubs agreed to become the sponsors of Rotaract rather than just Port Arthur. Also Warren took the lead on the management of the Santa Claus parade, contributing hugely to the enormous success of the parade.

D. Pandemic

When the pandemic hit and all in-person events were cancelled we missed only a few meetings before starting anew with Zoom. This has turned out to be a welcome addition to our meeting format, and one can speculate that once in-person meetings resume this will still be a useful tool. In fact our meeting attendance grew, and we were able to attract superb speakers from outside our immediate area.



This summary represents some of the key highlights of the year. However our normal activities continued until March. These include Dew Drop Inn, Wilderness Discovery, carol sing, anniversary dinner to name just a few.

There are many members to acknowledge for their great work during the year.

These include but are not limited to Warren, Chris, Krysta, Kevin, Michael, David Legge, David Silliman, Brenda, Bill Green, Bob Tomlinson, Laurie.

I wish to also acknowledge that Warren Philp and Chris Bailey were recognized as Rotarians of the Year for their commitment not only in this year but throughout their Rotary service. I cannot think of two more deserving Rotarians.

This is my report.

Regards,

Rod Morrison

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