

Presidents Report 2020

2019 was a watershed year for our club. We have increased the club's exposure and profile in the community like never before. From the Canada Winter Games, the CFR, parades, Canada Day, Alberta Culture Days, Pure Dance Workshop, Family Dances, and lessons. We have accomplished this with a great team of people. We touch people's lives thru dance in so many ways. We continue to give people a chance to do something they would not have had the opportunity to do on their own. We represented the club, the community, Red Deer, Alberta, and Canada.... I could not have even dreamt all we would be doing on this scale. The club's profile is at an unprecedented level. When I sit on other community group boards, and focus groups, people know who we are and want us involved with their community events. 2019 was undoubtedly our busiest year ever! We capitalized on the opportunities we had to benefit our organization and are doing more than we ever have.

- 1) Sponsor the Celebrity Dance Off 2019 - Benefits for Friends of the Red Deer Hospital, we had 20 volunteers at the event.
- 2) Donations – From our Christmas Party to the Red Deer Culture and Heritage Society
- 3) Family Dances – Continue with a strong sub committee (of 8 people) helping promote the dance. Partners now include the Red Deer Native Friendship Society, the Red Deer Culture Heritage Society, the Red Deer Arts Council and the City of Red Deer. The City helped sponsor the Family Dance with the Canada Winter Games on the grounds of the Winter Games with Frannie Klein. We continue to bring the love of dance to a whole new generation of people by exposing them to a positive, healthy, family friendly community event.
- 4) Parades in Red Deer, Lacombe and Blackfalds to promote ourselves, our sponsors, and project a positive image.
- 5) Performances at senior centers for Christmas Shows. The seniors love it and we went to new centres.
- 6) Alberta Culture Days - Cross promoting other dance organizations in Red Deer during the weekend. The Celebration of Dance we spear headed has become an important part of the weekend events and is an official sub committee of the Red Deer Arts Council. We helped with the production of the Celebration of Dance component at the newly opened City of Red Deer Culture Services. Was well attended. We promoted our club and dance in general.
- 7) International Westcoast Swing Flashmob – Promoting W/C Swing in the community and representing Red Deer globally.
- 8) Pure Dance Workshop weekend - World class instructors from the USA and Alberta to help us host another successful weekend workshop, that broke even financially. Good attendance locally and from Edm, and Calgary.
- 9) Donating manpower and equipment for Red Deer Culture and Heritage Society New Years Eve fundraiser raising approx \$3,000 for the society.
- 10) Partnering with the Canada Winter Games – Performing in the Opening Ceremonies Show. We were the closing act for 3:40 just before the lighting of the torch. – Making of a commemorative pin for the event. Some still available at cost.
- 11) Canadian Finals Rodeo – Performances at the Rodeo gave us good exposure and we look to expand our involvement for 2020 and increase our profile by becoming a sponsor by doing shows and advertising at the Rodeo.

Financial

2019 was one of our biggest budget years to date of \$54,450. We wanted to spend some of the built up reserves to capitalize on the Winter Games and increase the profile of the club, institute our recognition program and build on our social component. We believe we accomplished that. Bingo revenue remains lower due to economic times, and we did draw down our reserves and gave members more opportunities such as the workshop re-imbursement program – we have given \$3,000 back to 15 members over 2 years. We operated at budget, and were aware of the decline in revenue from bingo. We have our Casino in April 2020, and will have a cash injection of approx \$23,000 by the end of 2020. This will replenish reserves. Keeping spending to budget and a strong income from more grants, donations, membership, and honorariums will keep us in a strong position. Putting our reserves in GIC and tracking them we will earn over \$1,000 in interest this year, something we did not do in the past. The investment we made in 2019 by having a bigger budget will have long term benefits. Maintaining fiscal responsibility while keeping the club involved in the community has been our goal. 2020 we set a smaller budget of \$46,650. One area that we are lacking is Grant applications. We have found many opportunities that exist, but have lacked the manpower to take the time to apply for the grants from organizations such as the Canada Council for the Arts, Provincial, and Canadian Foundations. Arts Vest is a program we are currently qualified for \$1,500 but require a corporate Sponsor to match. We need a person for the grant position.

Board Level

As a board we put together important terms of reference for succession planning. Written documents for financial policy, and terms of reference for the social position, membership & bingo, Family Dance, Marketing Plan, budget, and strategic planning. Having these important plans committed to paper lets everyone know what we are doing and how we are doing it. This makes it easier to show new people that are willing to help out how they can contribute. All are on our website.

Membership and Dance Team

Membership is strong and consistent. We developed new membership levels to involve more people. We introduced our recognition program of pins for lesson completion, years as a member, on the Team, and serving on the board. Our dance team continues to add new people. Jackets for new people remains an important recognition program. The team continues to be an integral face for the club in the community and projects our purpose to the public. We have built relationships with other groups and are being asked to participate in high profile events such as the 2019 Canada Winter Games the CFR and more for 2020 such as Pan Am games, French Canadian Carnival, the National Stihls competition and more....

Attendance

Remains very strong at classes, dances, and workshops. Classes such as 2-step and Westcoast Swing are at capacity at Festival Hall and we are open to the idea of expanding further. The free to attend drop-in Tuesday evening practice time we book at Festival Hall organized by Bob and Dorothy Gosselin continues to be popular and will continue as another benefit we offer as a club.

Vision Statement

Share knowledge and build community relationships through dance as an art form

Mission Statement

Promote Country Western Dance in the community through lessons, dances, workshops and performances

From a recent article..... The Science of Exercise and a Bit of Motivation

Scientific research shows that the best exercise you can get to live longer, and in better health is dancing. How can that be the latest, best new exercise hack? And the scientists agree! Dancing does much more for your body, your muscles, and your brain. You have to be disciplined, coordinated, flexible. You need good posture and strong muscles. You have to control your breathing. It keeps your brain active, because you have to integrate so many different things at once—moving your arms, legs, and head in the right way, keeping in time to the music. You have to be aware of others on the dance floor and gracefully avoid them. You have to memorize the steps. All that work makes your brain develop more cells and a bigger hippocampus. It helps protect you against memory loss, against cognitive decline. It's great for preserving your sense of balance; dancers don't fall over as they get older and so they stay out of hospital and live longer. It's sociable; mostly you dance with other people. And you can practice at home if you want. It lifts your spirits and stops you from getting depressed. You live longer, you're happier, you have more energy, and you make friends. Dr Rehfeld concludes with advice that could get us up out of our seats and dancing to our favourite beat. "I believe that everybody would like to live an independent and healthy life, for as long as possible. Physical activity is one of the lifestyle factors that can contribute to this, counteracting several risk factors and slowing down age-related decline. I think dancing is a powerful tool to set new challenges for body and mind, especially in older age." This study falls into a broader collection of research investigating the cognitive and neural effects of physical and cognitive activity across the lifespan.

So, lots of scientific reasons to motivate you to get dancing. So let's have a positive influence on our community and get more people dancing!!!

Providing leadership in the community.

We have established ourselves as a leading performing artist group in the City. We have the people, the passion, and the talent to influence others. If we are doing a show at the Canada Games, working with and co-ordinating with other groups like we did at Alberta Culture Days, or providing manpower to help with a fundraiser people are looking to us for leadership. We are providing that example to others. I am so proud of our club and what we continue to do in the community.

We are impacting more people thru dance in a positive way. This is what continues to inspire me and when I get tired I focus on that and the impact we have. I think.... what if Country Pride didn't exist... I think it is this strong sense of purpose... why we are here. Why Country Pride has endured... What we do, when people "get it" they want to help others experience the joy of dance.

Member Benefits

Continuing the bingo for membership program to include membership, swag, lessons, and all team benefits for free
Expanded the Festival reimbursement to include workshops as \$200 times 2 for extra bingos worked above membership.
Covering more costs for dance team. Outfits, Boots, Hats and Jacket recognition program.
Pure Dance workshop to bring instructors from out of town to Red Deer.
Tues night practices for free at Festival Hall & optional instruction
Developing Teacher and Training program for succession
Looking at sponsorship program for dancers.
Continue to do more social activities to grow membership

Vision for 2020

Continue to work with other community groups, be involved with events such as CFR, carnivals and Festivals.
Continue to build relationships with other community groups leaders and businesses to cross promote each other....
We will develop new leadership for the board, committees, and teaching to ensure club longevity.
We are looking for a corporate sponsor for the Family Dances.
We have been pre-approved for the Arts Vest Grant and I have attended the 16 hours of training to qualified for \$1,500 grant, but we need a corporate sponsor to match.
We are booking more paid gigs for 2020, with the Arts Council other large events coming to Red Deer.
I have built relationships with the Mayor, City manager, Councillors, other President of non profits, and business leaders to help our club move forward.
We all have things we accomplish as individuals, but I hope everyone buys into how important what we are doing as a club is. It is just dancing; however it is an important part of our lives that enriches us all if we choose to let it.