

President's Thoughts Country Pride Dance Club 2018

I have been involved with Country Western Dance since 1985.... learned how to 2-step when I was 8 years old and still love to dance as much or more today.....I continue to be impressed year after year how we continue to grow as an organization.... We have such a great team of people that make up this club. We keep reaching new levels with the Club, and with that more community recognition. We touch people's lives everyday.....

I am SO proud to represent Country Pride in the community. I also serve as President for the Red Deer Culture Heritage Society and on the Red Deer Arts Council. We have built relationships with these organizations that deepen our relationships in the community. We have built this club into a leader in the arts and culture community. People know who we are and we are making a difference. I am going to list the things we did in 2017 to help the community and promote our club.

- 1) Sponsor for the Celebrity Dance Off - Benefits for 2017 to the Children Advocacy and Sexual Assault Center
- 2) Family Dances - Partnering with and helping to promote the Red Deer Culture Heritage Society, the Red Deer Arts Council and working with the City of Red Deer. We bring the love of dance to a whole new generation of people by exposing them to a positive, healthy, family friendly community event.
- 3) Participation in the Red Deer Parade to promote ourselves, our sponsors, and project a positive image to the community.
- 4) Sponsorship for the Canada 150 fireworks celebrations for Canada Day to help make it a big event for the entire City.
- 5) 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.
- 6) International Westcoast Swing Flashmob - Promoting the City of Red Deer internationally around the world by being featured in a world wide promotional video featuring 246 cities around the world. Promoting with Red Deer tourism on their website and ours.
- 7) Brought in world class instructors from the USA to help us host a successful weekend workshop
- 8) Donating manpower and food to the Red Deer Culture and Heritage Society in a co-operative event at the Cronquist House to show community support.
- 9) Donations to the Red Deer Food bank and the Christmas Bureau
- 10) Performances at senior centers on a volunteer basis to spread good will.

Financial

Although our bingo revenue was down from 2016 due to economic times we operated approx \$4,000 under our 2017 budget of \$52,574 and continued to build on our cash reserves. Casino revenues we also down in 2017 from our last Casino in 2014 from \$28,000 to 22,500. However keeping spending to budget and strong income from donations, membership, and honorariums kept us in a positive cash-flow position. We do a lot in the community and for our membership, and yet maintain fiscal responsibility to keep the club self sustaining. Setting a budget of approx \$50,000 for 2018 will allow us to continue with our programs and plan more events for the future.

Membership and Dance Team

Membership is strong and consistent. We developed new membership levels to involve more people. Our dance team continues to grow with new people and we add more material to our public performances. 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.

Attendance

Remains very strong and well attended. Classes such as 2-step and Westcoast Swing are to capacity at Festival Hall and we are open to the idea of expanding further.

The free Tuesday evening practice time we book at Festival Hall organized by Bob and Dorothy Gosselin continues to grow and is well attended. It is 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.

I have personally seen the benefits of dance and its effects on people many times. People doing things they never thought they could do is what keeps me involved with dancing. There are many articles I have collected over the last year that are on our website that shows the benefits of dance. Everything from prevention of alzheimer's and dementia, helps muscle retention mental focus, balance but also social benefits and connecting with the community and people. In the digital age we live in and people being more reliant on technology we tend to lose the sense of community. Dance helps with that whether it's a Dad dancing with his little princess at a Family Dance, someone learning to dance and breaking through that personal fear, performing in a parade and checking that off the bucket list, we are.... and do change and touch lives in a very positive way.

I lived this myself when a new student called up for a dance lesson a little over a year ago and didn't know there was even beats to music.... I had seen this before and encouraged him like anyone else we have taught. Although the first few lessons weren't fun that soon changed and he was hooked. He started to enjoy the lessons and rose to the challenge of learning and gained that insatiable thirst to learn more dancing. That kind of student not only challenges us, but reminds us why we dance. He went on to join the dance team and continues to learn at a pace that impresses me so much. The dancing however is only one part of the benefit.... the feedback we receive from him and people that know him, tell us developing this part of his life that he didn't even know existed has changed him for the better. It has changed me too. In 2017 Kathie and myself were nominated and won the Mayor's Recognition award for Community Builder for the City of Red Deer. At that event my Mom and sister got to meet Kathie's Dad and we were recognized with our dance club friends in front of the whole city thanks to Miloslav Bozdech (Mila).... Thank You. In this club you not only meet people, but you touch each other's lives in a very special way.

Member Benefits

Continuing the bingo for membership program to include all lessons
Increase the Workshop reimbursement from \$200 to \$250 times 2
Covering more costs for dance team. Recognition program.
Planning workshop to bring instructors to the area
Tues night practices for free at Festival Hall & optional instruction
Exploring options for social dances to add to the Family Dances.
Developing Teacher and Training program for succession
Looking at sponsorship program for dancers.
Continue to do more social activities to grow membership

Vision for 2018

We will continue to work with the 2019 organizing committee and the culture lead to help promote arts and Culture with the 2019 Winter Games and other high profile events such as the CFR and others.
We will continue to build relationships with other community groups and businesses to cross promote each other.... we are not an island unto ourselves.
We will develop new leadership for the board, committees, and teaching to ensure club longevity.
We have already secured a sponsor for the Family Dances and matching grant with Arts Vest for \$1,000, potentially more.
We have been approved for the Community Culture Development Grant of \$2,220.
We are booking more paid gigs for 2018 than ever before. \$3,000 plus

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.