

Presidents Report March 2014 - Rob Ironside

Our Mission Statement:

" Promote and preserve Country Western Dance, through Lessons, Demonstrations, workshops and competitions. To support a dance team and to promote the club in the community and beyond by being an ambassador of the spirit of the organization."

First off I have to say how proud I am of our board of executive, our dance team, all our members, and anyone who wants to learn to dance. This is an exciting time to be involved with the our Club, 2013 was a busy year. A lot of things we did generated excitement for the club. Most clubs or no-profits would love to be in the position we are in. I believe we are at a special moment with the club to be able to do some big things.

We are financial sound with resources, and people to do what we envision. 2013 was our biggest budget year yet, at almost \$38,000, but with Bingo revenues up, and strong membership we have more reserves let then we budgeted to have. People on the exec are passionate about the club, the dance team is very active, & lessons very well attended.

Over view of the new Initiatives

1) We decided last year was to host bigger workshops to bring more talent to Red Deer, instead of people having to go outside of Red Deer to learn and see the vision & possibilities dance. We brought some of the biggest names in dance to Red Deer last year. 3 Workshops - Gary MacIntrye & Susan Kirkland, Jason Wayne, and Mario and Stephanie Rabuo. Budgeted \$3,000 spent \$3,700, we had 3 dances at these events that were well attended.

2) More money towards promotions, one example was the team and its profile, coats etc. free for team, 1/2 price for members, full price for anyone else.

We did more shows in 2013 - total of appox 12 shows in the community, and are becoming more recognized and asked to perform at more events. Budgeted \$4,000 spent \$4,064, and made \$1,000 in shows in honorariums.

3) Increased the amount members could receive for reimbursement for attending festivals in Edmonton, and Calgary from \$200 to \$250/person - Budgeted \$5,500 spent \$5,471

With these initiatives I believe we have more excitement with the club then ever before. The money was well spent and we still have reserves.... excess of \$50,000. Going into 2014 year with stronger bingo revenue (appox \$2,000/mnth), a casino this year (approx \$27,000 pool), and well attended lessons the club has the means and the people to do so big things for dancing in the area, and influence the community in Alberta.

We had our sound system stole from our storage unit, but insurance replaced it with a better sound system. Used for dances, shows, and lessons. We also purchased a video camera for lesson reviews on line, & established a big on line library.

Results

Lesson, and membership attendance has grown again over 2013 from previous year.

Team - Has Changed the dynamic of the club and more are involved. Sense of Pride

Website traffic and Facebook group is busy as lines of communication. Up to 1800 visits/mnth 40-60/day

More friendships, more committed people.

People see what the club does for them. We have become a friendlier club that does not just offer dance lessons.

Committed to giving people the chance to attend festivals to learn more and see potential of dance.

Sponsorship the Celebrity Dance Off contest last year and this year to promote dance and our club in Red Deer.

Focus for 2014

Together we create that environment people want to be a part of. I want to paint a picture of something we can all be a part of.... something that the newest member to the most seasoned member can be excited about. I would like 2014 to be our year to re-invent ourselves. Become the leader in the performing arts for Red Deer, and influence the Province. The challenge is that we do not have a role model, we are unique in our structure and success. There is no other organization to my knowledge like ours that do what we do. We can make a difference to the arts, and the community.

Why are the arts, ie why is dance important... helps defines our purpose.

Our club helps create memories, and builds friendships with our members & the community that last a lifetime. Community dances, lessons, workshops, performances, going to festivals all do that for different people at different levels.... beautiful thing about the club is that you can be as involved as you want, and get those experiences from it.

The arts is not the driving force it could be in this area. However Alberta is know as a hotbed of Country Music and Dance. Country Pride has the chance to build a legacy, to impact not just Country, but dance in general, and not just in Red Deer, but for the whole Province....

Helping people realize dance and it's importance..... why is dance important to you? It is not just about dance, it is the self confidence, the self esteem, and the sense of pride you get from doing something you didn't think... or were scared to do. Breaking thru self imposed boundaries, doing something that you were afraid to do. We want to empower people through dance, and challenge themselves.

I remember what it was like, how scary it was learning to dance, but also how fantastic it was when I didn't let those fears beat me. I remember going to my first dance festival, competing at my first dance contest, teaching my first class, and hosting our first festival. We all create that environment from that newest person to the people on the dance team. Continue to focus on being friendly, fun, & encouraging place to be...

How we describe to someone what it feels like to have this passion and ... to pass it on to others, and see the impact it has on people is fantastic. It becomes our purpose.

Vision for Lessons & workshops and dances for community

- Keeping all we do affordable and welcoming for beginners.
- Workshops can be a financial success and opportunity for all to benefit
- Preserve dance as a culture - country, swing & more by exposing the community to the dance and showing what we do.
- Keeping the performance team all inclusive, and continuing to welcome new members and evolve our routine.

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How to best accomplish our mission by a Focus on...

- Continuing to promote our lessons, team practices, workshops. More social dances possibly in co-operation with the arts council and festival hall, work with local artists, and performers. Build more community roots.
- Build more membership through offering good value in lessons, and other benefits of membership.
- To work with the Red Deer Arts Council, and other groups in co-operative projects... ie dances.
- We have put our club on the map again for the province by offering workshops. Continue with that and hold 2-3 big workshops..... and continue bring in top notch instructors to Alberta.
- Continuing the jackets for the Team, and other ideas to boost image and marketing for the club.
- Continued online presence such as facebook, & our website with lessons posted - Grow our online presence ie. Twitter, you tube adds, google+, and others for marketing for brand and public awareness.
- Continuing to grow our marketing for the club with fresh ideas.
- Maintaining and grow our video reviews of lessons, and our video library on our website.
- More Members for the team - More Demos to promote dancing and the club.
- Develop strong leadership with the executive, and provide resources to grow.
- Develop a grant committee for alternative funding source, and not be as dependant on Bingo/Casino fundraising
- Look at team performing on Floats or parades, promotes the fun of what we do.

Critical we all help create the environment that people want to be a part of. We can learn, have fun, and be part of something unique that promotes dance. A great place to have fun, meet people, make new friendships & memories....

Keep on Dancing.....