

President's Message #9 To the AGM 2024

The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime.

Babe Ruth

Our 2024 AGM will be held on April 18th at Norway House. It's hard to believe it's been a year since a new board was elected—and what a lot of changes we have seen.

First, some thanks for our great team on the Board of Directors: Rilla Ballantine, Dennis Crabtree, Ian Faris, Jason Frank, Bob Law, and Margaret McNay. It is a pleasure and an honor to work with these talented people. Their dedication to the club and their vision for the club to succeed and grow is inspiring. Unfortunately, we are losing 2 members of this board—Ian and Jason. They will be missed.

Roger Botting, Editor of our blog, has been working hard to get those blog posts out there. We want to thank everyone who wrote articles to be posted over the last year and we want that to continue—and we want more members to contribute articles. We encourage committees to use the blog to get the word out about what they do. Roger has been a one-man show this last year and we are looking for at least two assistant editors to help him. Thanks again, Roger, for your hard work.

An update on membership: we are at 370 subscribers, and we now have subscribers and contributors from around the world, from Scotland to Tasmania. We are truly around the globe. It's really great for the club.

I want to thank my friends and past Presidents, Danielle LaBonté and Steve Sproston. They did a fantastic job on Presenters' Nights and had a wide variety of speakers from all over. Unfortunately, they will not be able to continue in their roles. This is an opportunity for someone else to contribute to our club by stepping forward to develop a new slate of presenters for our enjoyment and education. Good luck, Danielle and Steve.

The 80th anniversary is an ongoing project that has been headed by Ian Faris, Dennis Crabtree, Richard Letourneau, and many others who have contributed to the planning. Ian, thankfully, has decided to stay on to finish the 80th celebration as he has been the leader for most of it.

External Competitions led by Jim Fowler and his team are on fire this year. They are winning awards again for our club. It's nice to see Jim's team putting us back in the lead where we belong.

Internal Competitions led by Sharon Moysey and Judy Plummer is also doing a bang-up job. They have a well-run committee and it's always nice to attend their Norway House Competitions Night.

Workshops led by Alec Lee and his great team have really done a marvellous job again. They fill up the calendar with just about everything related to making our club members better photographers—iPhone photography, postproduction, and everything in between. Just a great job.

My friend Rilla and her team have again taken us on some fantastic field trips. Rilla and her team always manage to keep finding great places to go and she has many more lined up this year.

Our Secretary, Margaret, worked with Camosun College to set up a VCC-funded \$1000 award for a Camosun College arts student: the Victoria Camera Club Award for Excellence in Photography. This is a huge accomplishment for our club and Margaret deserves praise for getting it organized.

Our SIGs hold a big place in the club and many of our club members enjoy being part of one group or another: Nature SIG is led by Jim Gardner, Street SIG by Bill Green, and Creative SIG by Kevin Keliher. Club members often tell me how much they love the SIGs and that it's their favorite part of the club. Keep up the good work!

I want to mention David Cox and Jerome Rozitis who put a lot into managing our Membership. David and Jerome are the first contact new members have with the club, so they play an especially important role in getting people into the club. I work closely with David and Jerome—they pass on to me the names of new members so I can call them to welcome them to the club.

Last but in no way least I want to thank our website team—Greg Blaney and Lori Moilanen, and Richard Letourneau, their advisor. Our club could not exist without our website. Douglas Layden works with Quadra Street Designs behind the scenes on our blog making sure it has the latest updates and fixes, so it runs smoothly.

As I said in the beginning, we've had a lot of changes over the past year.

First, we got our picture in the newspaper. Bob Law and I had an article written up in the Times Colonist and many other local papers. That, I think was a first for the club.

Next, we reached out to the Saanich Fall Fair to set up their annual Photo Contest. That was also a first. Dennis and his team did just a superb job getting it going and we made a lot of contacts and attracted some new members. It showcased us as a club and made an impression at the Fair.

Our blog has grown and grown and is now around the world. This will give us a chance to see what other people in other parts of the world do in photography, and some will contribute articles. Our club will benefit from that knowledge.

As I mentioned earlier, we now offer a scholarship at Camosun College. This is a big first for the club.

Our membership is still growing. At the highest we were at 265 members. We continue to fluctuate close to this number and are close to matching the biggest club in Canada. I will continue to reach out to other clubs and promote our blog to as many people as possible. I will work tirelessly to reach the goal I set for the club of 275 members. I have one more year in my term to achieve that goal.

One of the dangers in trying to thank people is the possibility of omitting someone. If I have forgotten anyone here, please let me know—and accept my apologies. Everyone in the club is important and every one of you contributes something to the club and makes our club that much stronger.

My first job, as President, is to make sure everyone feels at home in our club and is welcomed. Thank-you all for your support.

James Dies – President – Victoria Camera Club

