

# President's Message #15

## Annual State of the Club

As is tradition, following our Annual General Meeting (AGM), I present the annual state of the club message to our members.

I am pleased to share some excellent news: all seven board members will continue in their roles for the upcoming term. Four board members' terms were up, but each chose to be nominated for another term and thereby remain on the board. This continuity is tremendous for our club, as these members have served for several years and have become adept in their positions, demonstrating strong leadership. Their experience and commitment are particularly vital as we face significant challenges in the coming one to two years. Having a stable and cohesive team is essential for meeting these challenges head-on.

The strength of our club is not limited to the board. Many dedicated and hardworking members play key roles in ensuring our club remains one of the best in Canada. Over 60 members have stepped forward to fill essential positions, making our club a welcoming and vibrant place for all members.

Our members are the heart and foundation of our club. The club exists to serve you, and it would not be possible without the dedication, effort, and passion contributed by every member. Thanks to your commitment, our club has become one of the most vibrant and outstanding clubs in Canada.

Over the years, countless people have grown and learned within our club, gaining valuable skills and knowledge. The impact of these experiences enriches not only our members, but also the entire city. It fosters a spirit of creativity and connection.

Beyond learning and artistic development, our club serves as a social hub. Many members have formed close, lasting friendships, making the club a place not just for photography, but also for community and camaraderie. For many of us, these relationships are the primary reason we became part of the club, reminding us that our community is as important as our art.

Now, more than ever, we need our members to be actively involved to keep our club strong and help it grow. One challenge we currently face is stagnation in membership numbers. It is crucial to attract new members, as they bring energy and fresh perspectives, and help strengthen the club's finances.

To address the membership issue, I encourage each and every member to spread the word about our club within the community. Simple actions like leaving brochures or flyers at your favourite spots, or sharing them with friends, can make a difference. Many in our city are not aware of our club; most new members find us only through online searches while looking for a club. Increasing our visibility is essential for growth.

I am also a member of other clubs, such as the London club and the Toronto club. My motivation is to learn from their practices and bring new ideas back to our club.

One trend I have observed at other clubs is their increased focus on the audio and video aspects of photography. The quality of their work in this area is impressive and adds value to their clubs. I invite our own club members to consider whether expanding into audio/video production would be a positive step for us. Incorporating documentary-style projects, street photography, drone photography, and videos to promote the club could add a new dimension to our activities. It would also be an excellent way to showcase our artists' work across various media.

I am grateful for our board's unity and camaraderie. We have developed strong friendships alongside our professional relationships, which makes managing the club far easier. Although we sometimes have

differing opinions, our decisions are always unanimous, reflecting mutual respect and a commitment to setting personal egos aside.

With a strong board and active participation from all members, VCC will continue to thrive as one of Canada's leading clubs. Our success depends not only on the board's leadership, but on the teamwork and dedication of everyone involved.

James Dies – President, Victoria Camera Club