



Seniors College of Prince Edward Island
President's Report for the Annual Year
01 July 2018 to 30 June 2019

This past year, Seniors College celebrated its 20th Anniversary by continuing to provide a broad spectrum of course offerings to its Members in an environment that provided both stimulating peer learning opportunities and fun. As part of the celebrations our Patron, the Honourable Antoinette Perry, Lieutenant Governor, hosted invited guests including current/past Board members and Course Facilitators at Government House.

The objectives of Seniors College are:

1. To provide stimulating peer learning opportunities for members
2. To make sure that learning is fun
3. To be responsive to the needs and interests of those 50 years and over
4. To work and develop links with other organizations to further the goals of the College
5. To initiate and participate in research on subjects that affect older adults' way of life

To achieve our objectives, the College relies not only on its Members but also on a dedicated Board of Directors and a Provincial Coordinator whom I cannot thank enough for their commitment and productivity. Similarly, our Course Facilitators never cease to amaze me with their skill and ability in sharing their knowledge and expertise with our Members. Our UPEI Board Liaison, Donald Moses, has also provided immense support in ensuring that our goals are achieved. **THANKS TO ALL OF YOU WE HAD AN AMAZING YEAR!**

Strategic Plan:

The year started off in July with the finalization and implementation of our Strategic Plan for the period 2018-2021. The SP outlines the organization's direction and guides decision making and activities over the next 4 years. The pillars of the SP which are core to the institution are:

- **Volunteers**
- **Lifelong Learning**
- **Social Engagement**
- **Value**

The identified strategies and key activities under each pillar were assigned to the relevant Committees and over the past year each Committee prioritized the strategies/activities and began implementing a plan for each. There was regular reporting at our Board meetings and we appear to be on track.

Challenges:

We experienced a number of challenges beginning with the sudden departure of our Provincial Coordinator of 4 years, Martha Ellis, at the end of July. The Board stepped up to handle the calls, emails and preparations for the busiest time of the year – September Registration. By September, Ann Ramsay was hired on an interim basis and managed to learn the ropes on an expedited basis in order to keep things happening. It was a real “baptism by fire” for Ann and we are forever grateful that she agreed to take on the job. In November, Ann joined the Board of Directors while continuing in the Provincial Coordinator role until January 2019 when Charley Scott was hired. Many thanks to Charley for his great work over the last 10 months.

Our second challenge was in September when the Registration process did not meet our expectations despite many upgrades and investments in additional bandwidth and support for Day 1 of online registration. As a result of the poor performance of our system it was decided that SC needed to totally revamp both our website and registration system if we were going to move forward with an effective and efficient administrative system for our members and the Board. The performance enhancements implemented by the end of June included migration to a new platform (Microsoft Azure) which could handle our capacity issues and optimization and upgrades to our existing website as well as enhancing communication with our membership. Although it cost approximately \$20,000.00 for the enhancements it was worth the investment and registration was no longer a nightmare. Special thanks to the funding provided by the Rotary Club of Charlottetown Royalty and the Government of Prince Edward Island for the necessary upgrades.

Partnerships/Community:

We have continued to maintain our existing community partnerships and have forged new initiatives with other partners.

- Our partnerships continue with the Province of Prince Edward Island and UPEI and we have partnered with Holland College to launch a “pilot tutoring program” for students in the Department of Health and Community Studies. Many thanks to the volunteers from our members who stepped up to participate in this initiative as well as to Pat MacAulay who spearheaded this initiative on behalf of SC.
- We renegotiated our Memorandum of Agreement with UPEI for a further 5 years. Special thanks to Donald Moses for supporting our proposals and ensuring the value of partnering with SC could not be measured by dollars alone.
- We met with various government officials to ensure that there was a greater understanding of the mandate and mission of SC and these meetings and applications resulted in additional grants of \$25,000.00 from the Province during the fiscal year.
- As a result of our previous presentation to the Rotary Club of Charlottetown Royalty we were encouraged to apply for a grant to upgrade our registration system and were successful in securing \$10,000.00 which enabled us to begin our system enhancements and upgrades by December 2018.
- The Communities of West Royalty, Brackley and Stratford continue to provide classroom space at no cost to SC.

Finance:

On the financial side, we ended the year with a Net Income of \$6,074.31 thanks to the hard work and dedication of our Treasurer, Mary Brodersen, and the Finance Committee. The budget was basically on track except for the additional costs associated with the website enhancements which were more than offset by the additional funding grants received. Our Equity is now a healthy \$57,320.51.

The “Independent Review” review conducted by Lisa MacKay of the CAAL Management Group confirms that “...The financial records of the association are up to date and appear to be in good order.” She also noted that “...All previous recommendations had been implemented by the Seniors College.”

Program/Courses:

There were 476 Members registered during the year distributed as follows:

- Queens: 414
- Kings: 18
- Prince: 44

The number of courses offered this year was in excess of 130 in the 3 Counties over 3 terms. The length of the courses varied from 1 to 8 sessions and the feedback from our Members is very supportive of the shorter length courses (1-4 sessions). The shorter courses require more work to organize and increase the number of courses required on our calendar. Each year up to 25% of the course offerings change and run the gamut from “academic” courses to physical exercise courses to wine tasting and cooking courses. The longer courses such as Art, Bridge, Island History, Computer and Cooking remain very popular.

Many thanks to Carol MacMillan and the Program Committee for all their hard work in selecting, organizing and finding Facilitators for the courses. The Committee is open to suggestions for new Courses and new Facilitators who can offer their time and talents.

The Board has agreed to purchase new amplification devices for use in the larger venues to improve both the sound quality and intensity.

Marketing/Promotion/Communication:

This year Jennifer Action and her Committee undertook a rebranding of our posters, pamphlets and banners to achieve a younger, more vibrant representation of our Members. Multimedia promotions were undertaken during the year including advertising in “The Buzz”; interviews on CBC radio and tv; and publications in the print media. Many thanks for all your hard work.

In closing, I would like to thank everyone who pitched in and dug deep when we were faced with adversity during the year – particularly the Board and Committees. Without the full support of each of you we would not have such a successful year.