

## President's Message #8

*"There are no strangers here; Only friends you haven't met yet."*- William Butler Yeats

It's been a while since I've sent a message to the membership.

There has been a lot going on with the club and I wanted to wait until the Board of Directors had some things in place before I sent out a new message.

This is an exciting time to be in the club. There are some great things happening that will make our amazing club even more amazing.

First, kudos to Margaret McNay, our secretary, for the work she did with Camosun College. Together, VCC and the College have established the **Victoria Camera Club Award for Excellence in Photography**. This \$1000 grant will support a student registered in the Visual Arts Diploma program. Also, the winner will be granted membership in our club until the year they graduate. That is exciting! We expect a new graduate will bring new and different ideas to the club.

This award is a huge boost for the reputation of the club as it gets our name into the educational world and news of this award will spread. This is what our club needs to attract younger people passionate about photography. It's a win-win for everyone.

With that in mind we have created a new volunteer position in the club called the "*Camosun College Student Photography Award Liaison*." This year Margaret will fill that position, but it could be open next year. It involves connecting with Camosun each year to ensure funds for the award get transferred to the College, attending the awards ceremony to meet the award winner, and hosting the award winner at club meetings.

Another exciting undertaking this year is our 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations. A special thanks to Ian Faris, Dennis Crabtree, and Richard Letourneau for the long hours and hard work they are putting in to get this done.

Richard has worked especially hard, mostly behind the scenes but has added a tremendous amount to the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event.

Here are a few of Richard's many contributions: He designed the logo; researched and prepared for over 40 hours to create a ½ hour video celebrating our 80 years; created new PayPal buttons for the Leah Grey event; created two new web pages to showcase 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary information and the "Day in the life of Victoria" photos. Indeed, Richard has done a great many jobs, large and small, for us. Ian's, Dennis's, and Richard's hard work and focus are paying dividends and will make our 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary a huge success.

Also, a special thanks to the External and Internal Competitions committees for getting involved. Their help is greatly appreciated. We want the entire club to be part of this, so watch the blog and website for updates. You will want to be part of this!

My job as President is to make sure our club grows and prospers and to protect the interests of this club. When I became President at the last AGM in March, I set a goal of 275 members from the then number of 250. As of today, we are at 266—only 9 more to go. I still have a year left in my term and I think we can do it. We are closing in on the largest camera club in Canada—which claims to have 276 members. If we meet my goal, we will be only 1 member behind!

There is a concern that I must talk about. It's related to the goal of having the biggest camera club in Canada. Retaining members is in fact just as important as attracting new members.

My concern is tied into the quote at the top of the page. We on the board are worried about the lack of social involvement in the club. Ever since the Covid epidemic we have not gotten people back to Norway House or out to other social events as we did in the past. We feel there probably comes a point for every club where some of its best members begin getting demotivated and withdraw from the club. Being social, however, is the glue that holds a club together. It's what makes us like to be in the club—making new friends and having some fun. Happy members are also those motivated to do good for the club.

My job, as President, is to help set the attitude of the club because attitude starts from the top. I and the rest of the board work hard to foster an ambitious, positive, and supportive atmosphere. I say "my door is always open" for a reason.

Bob Law, our Treasurer, is going to send out a survey soon so we can learn more about the motivations of our members and find out what our members want out of the club. When the survey comes out, please read

it over and be honest in your responses. The survey will be totally anonymous, so feel free to say exactly how you feel.

James Dies – President – Victoria Camera Club