

GYRO DISTRICT VIII

2018 District Convention – Nelson, BC: June 7 – 10, 2018

“Club Report”

Club Name: Regina Gyro Club

Frequency and Format of Club Meetings: twice monthly, a lunch meeting for Gyros and a dinner meeting for Gyros and Gyrettes

Other Key Club Activities: New Year’s Levee on Jan 1st; bocce tournament in July; help with Salvation Army Christmas Kettle Appeal; provide music scholarships for Regina and area students—5 scholarships for performance, one of these is awarded through the Regina Music Festival; 2 scholarships for young composers; the winners attend June meetings to receive their awards

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Club: friendly group of men and women; many members meet regularly for coffee at other times besides Club functions; aging demographic and loss of members leading to problems of filling positions, as well as challenge to financial viability in terms of meeting hotel minimum plate numbers etc; for 2018-19 the Club is moving from the Travelodge Hotel to a restaurant meeting room; we have had a good relationship with the Travelodge for many years, but the numbers are no longer viable for us or for them.

Membership Recruitment (Methods used; Successes; Future Strategies):

Typically word-of-mouth and bringing guests who then join, but these have been very few of late, and have not kept up with losses due to age and infirmity; tried advertising in local coffee-shop newsletter—no response;

Several years ago we agreed to be a “case study” for a group of three adult students in a course in public relations and communications. This produced a number of recommendations for recruitment. One problem is the traditional “boot-straps” issue—in order to implement something like a recruitment drive with special events etc, a contingent of members able and willing to take this on is necessary.

These students attended a Gyro meeting as part of their case study. One of them, a young woman in her thirties, said she would be interested to join the Club because of the excellent speakers and the musical entertainment provided by young musicians. Of course, this is not possible because Gyro membership is limited to men only. We compromise now in terms of meetings, since the lunches are men only and the dinners are mixed. But women have no voting rights in the Club. In my view, this structural issue should be addressed; what may have been appropriate in 1912, before women had voting rights in most of our jurisdictions, is arguably not appropriate in the 21st century. At the same time, I am aware that some of our members have stated that they would prefer to keep the gender rules the way they are.

Methods of Communication with Club Members: our Secretary, Terry Field (Bonnie), runs a very efficient phoning committee, which calls members before each meeting or other event; but these duties are falling more heavily on fewer and fewer members, for the same demographic reasons as noted above; Terry also informs Gyro International regarding changes to our membership list; Ken Rockel (Isabel) sends newsletters to our membership list from some other clubs, although all of our members are not on e-mail; e-mails from the President are sent to members regarding up-coming functions

Member Awards and Milestone Celebrations (with dates), if any: our Health and Welfare officer is Keith Picketts (Jean); Keith reports at every meeting about birthdays, anniversaries, and the status of members who may be in hospital or care situations; our recent (May 24th) special event, La Soirée, included mention that five Regina public schools have been named after members of the Gyro Club—two of these gentlemen, Henry Braun (Helen) and Bill Ready (Fran), were both at the event; the website includes photos of Gyrette lifetime pins awarded this year to Marjorie Hart (Ken) and Eleanor McNeil (Jack); member Bob Kelly (Marion) was nominated for Volunteer of the Year for his work with Meals on Wheels;

Date of Next Installation of Club Officers: 21 June 2018 (as of June 4, there are no nominations received for President and Vice-President; we have been without a Vice-President for the past year)

Date of Founders Night event: this is not part of our calendar of meetings and has not been during the time I have been involved (20 years); some of our meetings have themes, such as the Remembrance Day meeting and the Christmas meeting.

Other (Comments, Questions, Concerns), if any:

I hear comments from time to time about the Gyro dues structure. When our numbers began to drop we tried lowering the annual fee. The result was that, after we paid District and International, there was zero left for the local club. The fee has been raised again to remedy this, but there are limits when a number of members are on retirement fixed incomes. The question I hear is this – what value is our club receiving for the existing fee structure, in which two thirds of our annual fee goes elsewhere?

Respectfully submitted,
Alex MacDonald
Regina Gyro Club President for 2017-18