

ACNO Presidents Report – 2020/2021

This past year has been a challenging and unique learning experience for us all. As a pandemic swept the world, arts and culture communities felt the brunt of the impact. Many organizations and business had to close their doors, and some permanently. Though through the difficult times, and isolation, humanity reached deep into its soul to search for connection... through art.

Film, music, photos, paintings, sculpture, culinary... the world reached out to artists and creatives to be entertained, uplifted, educated and for a while escape the reality of our times. Art became an outlet for expression and a way to cope with our emotions and feelings.

This past year our creative community came together to collaborate on a successful online platform called Isolate and Create. It became a space to share and connect not only our cultural community, but to reach beyond to everyone who wanted to connect online, learn, and play.

While our own Vernon Community Arts Centre (VCAC) had to initially close its doors, with the support of the government we managed to open our doors again safely with proper protocols. In fact, since the doors re-opened the centre was running at full capacity as our community flocked to express themselves through art. Thank you to our supportive staff for helping our community cope with these difficult times.

This past year, the theme of staying and buying local benefited our local artisans, as the annual Artsolutely broke sales records. As the renaissance was birthed out of the black plague, our creative community is growing through a pandemic. May our creative community flourish into the future.

While we contemplate the future, the board at the ACNO has reached out to our members for feedback in order to structure the organization and steer our new strategic plan. As we implement your comments, and navigate opportunities, we will take a larger step to differentiate and separate the two brands of the ACNO and VCAC. We feel that creating more clarity will help each brand grow.

As our community changes, so is our organization. We would like to wish Terry Dunstan, our current VCAC Manager the best in her future endeavors as she retires from our organization this spring. Terry has been an asset to VCAC and while we may no longer see her in our office, I'm sure she will be around to offer her wonderful glass courses.

Thank you, Gale for steering ACNO through COVID19, the board for your dedication, and our many sponsors and grantors for your support. It has been an honour to serve this organization as President for the past 6 years, and it is now time for me to pass the baton to the next. I will still continue to serve the arts and culture community, but in a different capacity moving forward.

Best regards,
Amanda Shatzko