

October 2019

Dear Friends and Associates of Sorrento Centre,

Happy Thanksgiving! We are so grateful for God's abundant blessing and your generous participation in the life of the Centre. This is a message from the Board of Directors. We just held our first meeting at the beginning of October with the newly elected and appointed members and wanted to introduce and orient you to the work of the Board.

First of all, we wanted to let you know how Board members came to be on the Board.

Five of our members are elected by you, the Associates, at the Annual General Meeting in May:

- Jason Cruikshank from Victoria
- Andrew Halladay from Surrey
- Marnie Peterson from Delta
- Elisabeth Thompson from Edmonton
- Sarah Williams from Calgary

One of our members is appointed by the Archbishop of BC and Yukon:

- Len Fraser from Prince George

Three of our members are appointed by the BC/Yukon House of Bishops:

- Shauna Aranas from Langley
- John Kramer from Kelowna
- Rebecca Obodo from Calgary

Two of our members are appointed by the Alberta Bishops:

- Shannon Kerr from Edmonton
- Brian Laver from Grande Prairie

Two of our members are appointed as Youth Representatives:

- Abigail Penner from Edmonton
- Vitoria Monteiro from Vancouver

The Board meets in person four times per year, and on the phone or internet as needed in between. Our job is to oversee and support the work of the Executive Director, to oversee the Finances of the Centre, to create and uphold a Vision for the Centre, and to work on policies and best practices for the Centre. We always want to hear from you and look forward into your input into these important conversations. This year, Andrew Halladay is the President of the Society, Marnie Peterson is the Vice-President, Shannon Kerr is the Secretary, and Rebecca Obodo is the Treasurer.

The Board has worked with the Executive Director and staff of the Centre to establish six operational priorities. They are as follows:

1. **Increase grants and donations:** To this end, in addition to engaging an ED with extensive experience in resource development, we asked staff to hire a Resource Development Manager. We have seen considerable success in working on this priority.
2. **Increase earned income:** Tourism bookings are down all over the Shuswap, but the Sorrento Centre has managed to remain stable in its earned income. We are asking staff to improve and increase our programming and marketing and communications initiatives in order to keep program and conference registrations up, including reinvigorating our Sorrento Ambassador program.
3. **Responsible staffing:** We are in a period of considerable transition among the staff of Sorrento Centre. This can be challenging, but also provides us with an opportunity to take a good hard look at how our Human Resource practices and policies are impacting staff. This is an area where the Board will be working hard over the next year.
4. **Proper maintenance and stewardship of our buildings:** Sorrento Centre has significant property resources, and it has been challenging to keep up to date on the maintenance of our buildings. We have spent the last little while putting considerable resources into getting our maintenance practice current, aiming towards having a preventative maintenance strategy rather than a responsive one. This means fixing buildings up before they get into a state where they need to be torn down!
5. **Proper stewardship of our farm and lands:** There is a persisting myth that the Farm is a financial drain on the Centre. This is not the case! In fact, there is great potential for the Farm to help us improve our earned income. Our plan is to engage a committed Farm Manager who can help lead us to a place where the Farm is really working for us.
6. **Launching the winter youth residential program:** The ED is currently in the process of hiring a Winter Youth Program leader. This person will help us get to a place where we can kick off this program that has been in the works for years. We are very excited to re-start year-round opportunities for youth leadership development.

This is an ambitious plan, but please notice the progression in these priorities: from improving our financial base, through caring for the resources we currently have, to launching new program initiatives. The Board is paying close attention to ensure that we receive money – be it new grants, increased donations, or improved earned income – before we make a specific plan to spend it. We encourage everyone to take a look at some of the new initiatives and offerings of the Centre and consider whether you are able to offer a financial gift to support and encourage us on our way.

The Board creates and maintains several committees which are responsible for some of the more specific work of the Board. Each committee has at least five members including at least one Board member. Associates and non-Associates are invited to be on the committees of the Board. There are also specific staff members assigned to support the work of each committee. This year, the committees are as follows:

Property Committee: The property committee provides advice and support to the ED and to staff on maintenance and repair of the buildings, equipment and grounds; as well as capital plans and projects.

Board members: Brian Laver

Staff support: Nancy, Kevin, Michael

Human Resources Committee: The HR committee provides advice and support to the ED on human resources policies and practices; as well as overseeing the Board-level employee grievance process.

Board members: Len Fraser, Jason Cruikshank

Staff support: Michael

Nominations Committee: The nominations committee provides support to the Board of Directors, committees and to the ED to ensure that there are appropriate candidates for nomination.

Board members: John Kramer, Sarah Williams

Staff support: Michael

Communications & Resource Development Committee: The CRD committee provides advice and support to the ED and Resource Development Manager on communications and resource development issues and initiatives.

Board members: Sarah Williams, Shannon Kerr

Staff support: Robyn, Michael

Farm Committee: The farm committee provides advice and support to the ED and farm staff on the agricultural and educational initiatives of the Sorrento Centre farm.

Board Members: Elisabeth Thompson, Sarah Williams

Staff support: Michael

Youth/Program Development Committee: The YPD committee provides advice and support to the ED and youth/program staff on programming issues, including the suite of youth programs.

Board members: Marnie Peterson, Abigail Penner, Shannon Kerr, Shauna Aranas

Staff support: Michael

If you or someone you know has specific skills or is interested in being a part of one of these committees, please contact the office and they will put you in touch with the Nominations Committee. Even if you are unsure of how your skills might be useful but you are interested (for example, you don't have a degree in agriculture but are interested in the farm) please let us know. We want to see lots of people engaged in this committee work!

More information about the Board, including the Bylaws, the Reviewed Financial Statements, Meeting Minutes, and the monthly Monitoring & Evaluation report can be found on the Sorrento Centre website as they become available: <https://www.sorrentocentre.ca/board>

The Sorrento Centre Board of Directors is committed to accountability and transparency. If there is information you are looking for, a concern that you'd like to resolve, or even a compliment you'd like to share, do not hesitate to be in touch. We will do our best answer your question or address your concern, and if we can't we will help you find someone who can!

God is at work at the Sorrento Centre, leading us in directions we have only just begun to imagine. We as the Board are excited to be a part of facilitating God's mission in our midst, and we invite you join us, to engage more deeply in the life and leadership that Sorrento Centre offers, and to consider how you might contribute to our ongoing journey.

With every blessing,

Andrew

the Rev Andrew Halladay

President of the Board of Directors

Sorrento Centre