

Good Evening and thank you all for being here.

I am happy to report that E.C.H.O. Players has had a successful year and we have completed all the projects we had planned during that time. There have been challenges, to say the least, but thanks to our Board, Committees and members, we overcame those challenges and we continue to grow as a Society as a result.

Our season ticket sales for the 2017-18 season reached 480 patrons and 245 members. Year after year, we see an increase in season ticket sales and memberships, which is a testament to the hard work our members do to ensure quality entertainment for our community.

Our Mission Statement reads: ***To nurture the love of theatre, we explore, expand and develop theatrical talent and we create quality entertainment for our community.***

With that in mind, the Board has developed a number of policies and procedures, including Respectful Workplace and Code of Conduct/theatre etiquette, the creation of a Production Liaison which was distributed along with tonight's agenda, updating the terms of reference for the many E.C.H.O. committees and a plan to increase youth involvement within our theatre group.

There have also been many upgrades to our properties, including the installation of a new HVAC System. Thanks to Jim Windsor, we applied and received a grant from the RDN to help offset the cost. A new box office ticketing system was implemented and we continue to upgrade the lighting, replacing old bulbs and fixtures with low energy ones as well as the installation of a new gas line, all in an effort to be more environmentally aware. We have also purchased a new laptop designated to our sound technicians and the old one will be used to maintain our library database.

The continual maintenance and upgrading of our building and equipment and the scheduling of the work has always been a challenge. Last year, the Board implemented a "dark week" policy where one week would be set aside after each production, which would allow the upgrading and maintenance to be scheduled during that time.

We have experienced an influx of organizations wanting to rent the theatre for various events, Dickens of a Twist, Oceanside School of Dance and Chesapeake Shores filming a few scenes in our theatre. Recent activities have resulted in the need for someone who would be able to handle requests and organize volunteers for same. Many thanks to Jim Windsor for volunteering to assume that responsibility.

Thanks to Margaret Jenkins and the One Act Festival Committee, we had a record number of entries last season, which is a testament to all their hard work and we were privileged to see "Pink" which was directed by Jennifer Kelly, with Hope Myre and Imogen Brown, a couple of incredible young actors. The ADC presented an exciting line-up for 2018-19 and coordinated workshops o Auditions, Set painting, thanks to Jeanne Ackles-Cardinal for facilitating it, an acting and director workshop presented by Michael Armstrong. A workshop for high school students was facilitated by Alistair McVey and Jennifer Kelly who also held speech and drama workshops and we held lighting, sound and acting workshop for STREAM, a specialty program in the district for Grades 4 – 7.

The Theatre Management Committee has had an especially busy year, ensuring all maintenance issues were attended to as well as keeping our building in good working order. In consultation with Judi Andrews, a new props room was outfitted and due to the volume of furniture and properties, with the help of Phil Copple and Jim Windsor, a storage locker has been secured.

The Publicity Committee has been busy securing sponsorships, maintaining a rapport with media outlets, participating in local functions and working with the poster distribution group, to ensure good exposure within the Oceanside community.

Membership increases from year to year and we are grateful to the membership committee for their efforts in renewing memberships, signing up new members and communicating with the membership on issues and events pertaining to E.C.H.O. Players.

Thanks to the Technical Committee, we are kept informed of issues relating to lighting and sound and we strive to utilize current technology on our productions.

We have such a wonderful group of people who enjoy designing, constructing and moving our sets. We don't often see or experience that aspect of a production, but at both the North Island Zone Festival and at Theatre BC Mainstage, E.C.H.O. Players won awards for Best Backstage Coordination.

Margaret Jenkins and our Social Committee ensure we have great snacks for our opening nights and other scheduled functions and thanks to Jan Taggart, we have a group of volunteers who continue to stock and maintain the bar. Tricia Brown is our concession coordinator who ensures that we have an array of goodies to choose from. Chris Lee provides us with current information on the website which is both appealing and user friendly.

Although the mural has been installed, the Arts Fund continues to meet and Mike Andrews along with Joe Martin continue to brainstorm on future fund raising projects. We are also working on a new project, "Legacy Giving" a theatre endowment fund, to ensure that there will always be live theatre in Oceanside. Spam & Maple Syrup, Part Deux was another hit this year and netted an amount of just over \$8,000. I'm happy to report that the Arts Fund is now in a surplus position.

E.C.H.O. Players is very lucky to have so many volunteers who step up and help out in different ways, from box office volunteers, front of house, concession, theatre management, publicity, Set construction, props, costumes, technical, maintenance, membership and all the other areas I may have left out. Please know how much we appreciate the time and commitment you dedicate to the theatre.

Sadly, some of our Board members will not be returning for another season. Although they will not be on the Board, they will be busy with other E.C.H.O. projects. Wendy, our very efficient and dedicated treasurer, has decided to step down as Treasurer. We are so grateful for all the hard work and effort she and Debbie Lecerf our bookkeeper have put in to ensure that our finances are prudently managed. Although she is stepping down from the Board, Wendy is in the process of directing our first play of the season, "Enchanted April" and she and Don Punter also volunteer for Front of House on a regular basis; Kerry Campbell, our Secretary has also decided to step down from the Board, but she is a new member of

the Artistic Direction Committee and continues to edit and circulate the “Bugle”; Susan Warner chair of the ADC for the past couple of years has done an incredible job of ensuring that both the ADC and PRC Terms of Reference were updated, along with her regular duties. She has recently retired from her “day” job. She is looking forward to some serious R & R, but still committed to helping out when she can; and although Linda Attley is retiring from the Board, she is still an active member of the Publicity Committee and has just recently taken on the role of Festival Chair of the 2019 North Island Zone Festival which E.C.H.O. Players will host from May 12 - 18. Those of you wanting to help out in any area of the Festival are encouraged to call her and sign up! As well, Mainstage will be hosted by Portal Players in Port Alberni the week of July 5th. We will be looking for volunteers to help out with both Festivals, so please keep your schedules free for that time.

I would like to thank the current Board members serving for another year, Margaret Jenkins who not only chairs the One Act Play Festival, the Social Committee also helps out backstage, most recently as ASM for Collected Stories; Ken McCready who chairs the Technical Committee, volunteers as lighting designer and assists his wife, Pam with her committee work for ECHO Players; Mike Andrews as Vice President who has been a valued sounding board and mentor to me. He is on the Arts Fund, he has worked with Spam & Maple Syrup, Dickens of a Twist and set construction. He also acts and helps out backstage or any other area that he is able to and lastly, also assists his wife Judi with programs, by-law updates, props organization, etc; Sue Murguly, having served one year of her term has carried been busy researching and co-directing Collected Stories, and she also serves on the publicity committee; Jim Windsor for taking on the theatre rental responsibility, for coordinating Spam & Maple Syrup and for the introduction of the ECHO Players Legacy Giving initiative; and for Jennifer Kelly-the time and effort she put in on the ADC, coordinating workshops, working with youth and directing and acting in ECHO Productions. Thank you all for your commitment to E.C.H.O. Players.

We have a wonderful lineup for the upcoming season and have been successful in signing up volunteers for most of the positions. If you haven't signed up as yet, please consider doing so. No experience necessary and the only criteria is that you want to have fun!

As I mentioned earlier, we will be hosting the North Island Zone Festival and assisting with Mainstage in Port Alberni. This coming weekend, the Beatles Experience will be performing at our theatre. The Qualicum Beach School of Dance will be performing at the Village Theatre again this year and we hope to have Bard 2 Broadway run their summer program at the Village Theatre again next year.

Overall, I think we have had a very busy but successful year, thanks to all of your willingness to step up and help out where needed. The talents you all bring to the table are greatly appreciated and we couldn't have achieved the success of this past year without each and everyone of you.

I hope to work with you all in 2018-19.