

GPACA AGM 2020 Director's Report

Directors (March 2019-March 2020): Dee Conrad (Co-Chair), Peter Garcin (Co-Chair), Paul Aucoin (Treasurer), Stacey Godsoe (Secretary), Phyllis Price, Tara Jaskowiak, Ebony Newell, Kristy Boutilier, Sadie Watson

YEAR IN REVIEW:

Our continued **mandate** is to support the sustainability of the school, education and support for children in our communities (this being the primary objective of the organization and its decision-making) - 2019 was largely a quiet year by recent standards, but there were still a number of notable milestones and activities.

Electoral Boundaries Commission

In early 2019, GPACA led a local campaign countering a recommendation by the Electoral Boundaries Commission to carve much of the PRES school catchment area out of Lunenburg West Constituency and lump it into Queens Constituency. Since we would be a very small and distinct community of interest in a much larger geographical area, we feared that such a move would reduce the attention that local concerns (such as those related to the school) would receive. Presentations were made to MODL Council (encouraging their involvement in the campaign) and to the Commission itself. We were thrilled in April to learn that our arguments were well received by the Commission. Their final report recommended that our area remain within Lunenburg West Constituency. Another win!

Community Spirit Award

In May, a small GPACA committee compiled an application to the Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award, focused on the area's citizen engagement, civic pride and positive outlook on the future. Our application was submitted on behalf of the eleven communities served by Petite Riviere Elementary School and with formal support from the Broad Cove Community Association, the Petite Rivière Community Park Association, the Lahave and District Refugee Support Committee, and Petite Rivière Elementary School and its School Advisory Committee. We were delighted in June to learn we had been one of the four communities in the province to win the award.

In addition to this wonderful recognition, we were given \$1500 to host a very special celebratory event organized by creative GPACA volunteers. Approximately 200 people came out to the school on September 6 to celebrate our award and meet His Honour, the Honourable Arthur J. LeBlanc, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, and his wife, The Honourable Patsy Leblanc. The Lieutenant Governor presented us with a hand-crafted crystal trophy, and each of the supporting organizations received a plaque recognizing their contributions to our area's community spirit. After the event the crystal trophy went on tour throughout the communities of

the Greater Petite Area, being hosted in each area for at least a week so that everyone could enjoy the recognition!

Working Groups

Last year at the AGM, we established a number of working groups to collect interested individuals together who wanted to either remain informed, or contribute to any efforts in one of the interest areas.

The working groups were: Green Directions, After School Care, Event Planning and Finance. After receiving some advice, and combined with the fact that GPACA is not actively fundraising for a particular endeavour, the Finance committee was dissolved.

Event Planning and After School Care

A couple of the groups had an eventful year. First, the Event Planning working group formed the basis of those that headed up the application for the Community Spirit Award.

And then, another one of the groups, After School Care, had success this year. Many thanks to Tara and Sadie for their tireless efforts in advocating for this program. As many of you may know, PRES now has a full time afterschool care program run by the YMCA.

Ratified Guidelines

Over the course of the year, we had an opportunity to spend some time to formalize some of GPACA's guidelines for support. The vision of any and all funding or non-financial support granted through the GPACA is to specifically focus on children, youth, the sustainability of the Petite Riviere Elementary School (PRES), and more broadly to enhance quality of life for all in the Petite Riviere and surrounding communities. The full guidelines will be posted on the website along with the minutes from this meeting and the various reports.

Support for PRES

After all was said and done with the Community Spirit celebration, there was a small amount of money left over. In keeping with our guidelines, GPACA opted to donate the excess funds to the art program at PRES. The amount donated was \$323.

Looking Ahead

The year ahead is definitely shaping up to be a challenging one in its own way. We would expect that most regular activities would be at least somewhat restricted because of the pandemic. However, there are still going to be many opportunities even at a distance to exercise Caring, Community, Common-Sense and Compassion to help everyone in our communities get through this unprecedented situation.