

Smoky River Agricultural Society

President Report 2018-2019

The past year has been a year of changes starting with the executive, new members and directors also including different programs.

Despite numerous barriers our fairground has been kept up by minimal work of our past fairground keeper but most importantly by the volunteers' efforts that helped weekly to keep activities ongoing. Special thank you and appreciation to all the volunteers who work at maintaining and keeping our fairground during the past season.

We initiated and sponsored a Farmer's market in Falher from October 2018 to April 2019. We held 8 markets with 7-8 vendors. Markets were well attended during events such as hockey tournaments or prior to special holidays such as Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's day or Easter weekend otherwise the markets were slow and vendors were not selling as much items. Our society will need to look at getting a new manager, increase the advertising, getting more vendors and finding a new venue if we want to keep on going with this venture.

Three directors had the opportunity to attend and take on some of the different workshops or sessions provided during the 2½ days conference of the Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies (AAAS) Conference last February 7-10th, 2019 in Edmonton. This conference was at its best and the attendees came back home rejuvenated, enthusiastic and well prepared for a new season bringing numerous innovative suggestions.

Our Agricultural society was visible and held a booth at the SARDA trade show on March 15-17, 2019 in Falher. This event also included the farm safety day activities held at the Night of Columbus building on March 16th.

We held a farm safety day event at the G.P. Vanier School in Donnelly on May 28, 2019 for the grades 9 & 10. 75 students came through the booths we had set up during the 80 minutes we were there. We provided more information and got their participation including some animal handling (horse) outside by the gym which was very much appreciated by the students. We will continue with this program in the future and keep adding on different activities for the students to participate.

Our ag society has been growing with young youth volunteers and new events as you will read in the reports added to the AGM. The Smoky River Youth and Young Adult Club, now called the Smoky River Riding Club, continued to be active with numerous gymkhana activities throughout the season. They were able to offer clinics and jackpot events during the summer and we hope to offer some different clinics in the upcoming year now that we purchased new gymkhana equipment.

Our ag society in collaboration with Alberta Health Services including Health promotion, French Health and the RCMP's held a new event this year. We held a bike safety in 2 different

communities on August 13 in McLennan and August 14 in Falher. We had a number of sponsors and provided 6 helmets for the draws. We also sponsored the community recreational project; the purchase and installation of a jumping pillow for the Regalo Park in Donnelly. The park was used extensively throughout the summer by the Donnelly children living in the area.

The planning of future infrastructure renovations/upgrades on our fairground was initiated. We had two windows and the main door of our fairground office replaced. Inspections of our electrical and plumbing set ups took place during this past year. Chain link fence has been taken down and has been relocated within the limits/markings of our fairground. We hope to get more upgrades in the spring and major renovations of our calling booth.

Our ag society has been brainstorming and starting to plan our next year event; a committee need to be actively involved in the planning of our 75th fair for August 2020. We will need ideas, suggestions and numerous volunteers to make this event bigger than any other fairs held in the past.

Our ag society need to evolve and consider other financial strategies, looking at fundraising in the future if we want to be more self sufficient. During this time of low economy, we need to seek more sponsorship and not allowing money prizes anymore. Our society need to explore fundraising event projects in the future and provide programs at a minimal or no cost. Definitely we will need to look at cutting some spending or increase our fees. We need to be tenacious, to prioritise capital projects and reapply to use AGLC funds for any infrastructure repairs or equipment replacement.

Overall it has been a fantastic year; I am looking forward to continue participating in the agricultural society activities, Happy New Year 2020.