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President's Message

September 1, 2018

Welcome back to a new season of curling. I am happy to report that the club is in great shape. All our leagues are full again except one that we are focused on filling. We have done significant work in the building addressing what we hope are the last big-ticket items for some time. As a result of that work, we are tight for money right now, but we expect that to ease up as the year progresses and we look forward to adding significantly to our capital fund over the new few years.

The year since the past AGM has been an eventful one. Highlights include the naming of life members for the first time in a generation. I was proud to induct Rod Matheson, Geoff Sheppard, Rachel Homan, Emma Miskew, Joanne Courtney, and Lisa Weagle as new life members. We also saw Team Homan named Canada's Olympic Women's Curling Team. They didn't get the result they wanted at the Olympics, but we, as a community, are extraordinarily proud of their accomplishments and look forward to supporting them just as fervently in the years to come.

The low part of the past year came just after the end of the season. Early in May, Rod Matheson, newly named life member and pillar of the Ottawa curling community, passed away. Since his time as President in the late 80s, Rod had become a community builder within the club. He kept an eye on things. He wasn't shy to mention his concerns if things didn't appear to be going well. His expressions of concern alone were often enough to get people thinking about how to set things right. He's the reason I joined the Board. Years ago, he encouraged me to get more involved. I'm certain that he's influenced other people in the same way. He will be sorely missed.

On to happier news. This year, we are happy to have a new addition to our club in the form of a new pro shop. Capital Curling Supplies has opened up in the old boardroom on the second floor beside the upper lounge. The new shop is the result of a competitive process we ran a few months after Joe Pavia announced he was selling Hogline. His lease was ending at the end of the season and we wanted make sure that there was still a pro shop here to service our members. The winning bidder, Goldline, agreed to open a shop that had stock from all the major manufacturers. We are thrilled to have familiar faces running the shop: Life Member Emma Miskew, Ben Miskew, and long-time club fixture, Sharon Gannon.

Over the summer, we undertook a number of major capital projects. We replaced the remaining seven roofs (we have many, many roofs) that had reached the end of their useful life. We had had a mid-winter leak in the apartment and the Board agreed that the work could no longer be put off. We also replaced the boiler that heats the building. It stopped working on one of those desperately cold days we had last winter and we were only saved by a spare part that had been fortuitously put aside. Despite not going all the way and zoning the heating within the building, the new system should provide a more even and controlled heat. I am hoping, with these projects completed, that we will now have a lull in our capital expenditures and we can focus on re-building our capital fund to prepare it for when all these major projects come due again and for the inevitable emergencies that will occur between now and then because of the age of the building.

There will be some changes to the board this year. By tradition, I have completed my two-year term and a new President should be elected by the new Board at the AGM. I will take over the *ex officio* director position of Past President on that Board and we will bid goodbye to Tom

Sinclair, the current Past President. I would like to thank Tom for all the advice and guidance that he has given to me and the Board over the last two years. He has remained deeply involved with Facilities and I look forward to him continuing to assist the club as an expert advisor. Also departing this year is Gord Sutherland, our longtime Facilities Director. Thank you for all your hard work.

This year, for the first time since 2015, we will have an election. We have six positions that will be vacant as of the AGM and we have eight candidates who have been nominated to fill them. We have three directors nominated for re-election by the Board: Vice-President Eddie Chow, Match Director Mike Burke, and Ice Director Paul Engelbrecht. We have one director nominated for election by the Board: Director at Large Ian Rathwell, who was appointed to the Board midway through last season. Finally, we have four members nominated for election by the membership: Wesley Blight, Scott MacDonald, Pam Ponio, and David Taylor. I wish all the candidates the best of luck.

I want to address a detail that some might notice in the AGM package. On the proxy form in the AGM package, the Board is required to indicate who the management designees (Nicole and Alex this year) will vote “For” if that section of the proxy is not completed. Since there are six vacancies this year, that should mean indicating six candidates from those available. The Board has chosen this year to only indicate those candidates who were nominated by the Board. Nicole and Alex are free to vote their conscience for the remaining candidates (or you can just fill out that portion of the proxy). We don’t think it’s fair for the Board to indicate a preference among candidates nominated by the membership, except in special cases, such as the need for someone with particular expertise, like a professional accountant. There is no such special case this year.

A huge thank you to Dalal Abou-Eid, our Manager, and to her staff. Dalal has the difficult task of actually running the club, something that she makes look easy. I’ve talked to a lot of other clubs in my time as President and one thing that really hits home is just how special it is to have a manager who is so dedicated to the club and its membership. I really believe that our club continues to thrive while others around us face serious challenges because of that hard work and dedication. Thank you.

I also want to thank Rick Allen for everything that he has given to the club. He’s not only an excellent ice maker (and I look forward to continued excellent ice), but he is an integral part of the club, always ready to pitch in when we need a helping hand. And another huge thank you to John Whitaker for his incredible dedication as a volunteer at the club. He’s everywhere and it’s much appreciated.

This AGM marks the end of my two-year term as President and I hope that I am leaving the club in as good of shape or better than when I took over. That wouldn’t have been possible without a supportive and collegial Board and without the hard work of our Manager, staff, Ice Maker, and volunteers. Thank you all for helping to make this job both manageable for a volunteer and enjoyable. I look forward to returning to life as just a curler and I can assure the membership that the club remains in good hands.

Matthew Kellett, President