

President' Report to Cedar Hill Golf Club AGM

November 16, 2014

It's hard to believe it's been four years since you elected me President. Before writing this report, I went back and re-read my reports from 2011, 12 and 13, to remind me of all the things that have happened. It seems like a blur.

In **2011** was a pretty good year. We saw the beginning of the online tee time booking system. We had some heated debates at the Golf Advisory Committee about cutting back our times, but we managed to hang on to our 65 summer swipes and avoided any reduction in Sunday tee times by agreeing to split the Sunday pass holder block into an early and late section, to open morning times for green fee players. That was also the year we agreed to reverse the order of play on the golf course, making old number 10 our new number 1 hole.

Then **2012** hit us. This was the year Saanich closed the restaurant and slashed the value of the passes by reducing the number of rounds we could play by 25%. As President, my job was to rally the troops, and you did not disappoint...we had hundreds of people out to all the public meetings, and many hundreds of letters and emails were sent to Saanich Mayor and Council. We did not win that battle, but we were able to mitigate some of the losses. We convinced Saanich to abandon their plan to restrict junior golfers, and to allow week-day passes to be used on Fridays. But full pass holders took a huge hit, and to protect our Club's membership, we responded by allowing members to choose for themselves whether to buy a pass or pay green fees, while maintaining their right to participate in all club activities.

On the positive side, this was also the year we hosted the incredibly successful 60th anniversary celebration, with 180 people coming together for golf, burger and cake. And everyone received a copy of the newly published Club History book that Aki wrote with help from many of our more senior members. The year ended with another positive note when we were able to renegotiate a three-year contract with Saanich, giving the Club some future stability.

2013 was the year the downstairs Grab & Run closed and Saanich re-opened food service upstairs. It was bare-bones and challenging at first, but we managed to host all our interclub meals and the awards banquet. We also hosted the 50th anniversary of the Cedar Hill Open, and the 45th anniversary of the Ladies Field Day. Our Club Captain Harold worked with the Match & Handicap committee to design new score cards that serve the competition needs of both men and ladies, so we no longer needed pink and blue scorecards. And by working together with Craig Rencher, we agreed to eliminate the weekend tee time blocks, in exchange for giving full pass holders 5-day advance booking privileges so we could book times on an equal basis with green fee players. Another major change came when Geri Simmons retired after 12 years as our hard-working club secretary. Gregg McKinnon was hired to take over this important work, and transitioned very successfully into his new role.

Which brings us to **2014**. This was Year 3 of the Saanich plan to phase in golf reductions, which would have put us at only 45 rounds this past summer. Fortunately the lobbying we did in 2013 paid off, and Saanich reconsidered the cut and left our summer rounds at 50, and added unlimited winter play for January and February.

All in all 2014 was a good year for our club. We welcomed a lot of new members, and some who had left returned. Best of all, our members are active participants, and our tournaments all saw an increase in entries. Wendy even added two new mid-week mixed tournaments which were very well attended.

Once again, we hosted a very successful Cedar Hill Open. The annual Ladies Field Day was full with a waitlist, with record proceeds – the Ladies were able to donate \$14,000 to Victoria Hospice.

Our Social Committee put on another well-attended spring triathlon at the Pro Pats Legion. And then they followed up by organizing a fabulous awards banquet and dance that attracted a sell-out crowd. I was interested to hear from a few new members and spouses that they really enjoyed the evening, because most clubs do not have a combined awards celebration – most have one for the men and another for the women. But that's not how we do things at Cedar Hill...we are one club and we all celebrate together.

We were fortunate to have the best summer ever, and the golf course was in spectacular shape. Maybe that made us all play and practice just a bit more, because we had some impressive competitive victories this year. For the first time in a long time, our Harry Young men's interclub team finished in first place! The Business Ladies interclub season ended up in second place, missing the trophy by only one point, and Cedar Hill players brought 6 medals home from the BC Senior Games.

Personally, I had one final goal before the end of the term, and that was to review and revise the two governing documents for our Club and have them posted on the website so all members can access them. The bylaws were posted to the website a few months ago, and the amendments you approved today will now be incorporated into the document before reposting it. Over the past few months, much work was done to review and revise the Rules and Regulations with final approval at our October Board meeting. That document is now also on the website for all to see.

I want to thank the Board for all their hard work this past year. Our meetings were often long, but I believe our decisions were better because of the variety of perspectives and ideas that were freely shared. Our new directors stepped up to new responsibilities: Shirley took over the website, Scott organized the senior men, Fay provided mentorship to our junior membership, Paul took the lead with a successful membership drive as well as apprenticing as vice captain, and Doreen represented the Ladies Division very well as the new Ladies Captain. Wendy did a ton of work in her second year as our Mixed Tournaments chair, and Harold provided great leadership in his third year as our Club Captain and chair of the Match & Handicap committee.

In particular, I also want to thank Arthur and Craig, who are both stepping down today. I was pretty fortunate to have two past presidents on the board and have appreciated their experience and mentorship. The Club has benefited from Arthur's extensive financial knowledge as our Finance Chair and his shoes will be difficult to fill. Craig let me talk him into being social chair again, and he in turn gathered together an energetic and creative committee to organize some awesome social events for us.

Finally, I thank our Club Secretary Gregg for all his support. Gregg stepped in, learned the job, got to know most of the membership, introduced some new ways of doing things, and made the job his own.

Looking back, I am pleased that I was able to help the club through some pretty transitional years. I was able to apply skills that I've learned in my career - crisis management, media relations, public relations, negotiations, and special events management.

I feel good about where the Club is now. We faced crisis, re-invented ourselves, and are now enjoying the beginnings of regrowth. I'm really pleased that Gregg McKinnon decided to put his name forward as President, and I have a great deal of confidence in his ability to keep the Club moving forward. And I will do my best, in my new role as Past President, to support Gregg and the incoming Board to make decisions that are in the best interest of the Club and our membership.

But of course at the end of the day, it all comes down to you, the members. Think about why you joined Cedar Hill, and what you value about this Club. Continue to participate in the Club's activities, and share your ideas and your time. Let's all work together to make this a Club that people want to join and belong to. Let's make sure Cedar Hill Golf Club continues to be a place where friendships happen.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,
Val Mieras
outgoing President