

Wildsight Kimberley-Cranbrook Branch 2022 AGM - President's Report

From last spring 2021 to this spring was another year of adjusting, adapting and accommodating, with the added hurdle of dealing with the pandemic protocols. There have been rewarding moments as well.

Early in 2021, Corrine Highwood and I instituted visioning into our board meetings, which has been really well received by all and has helped us achieve several goals. Our agendas include 1/2 to 3/4 hour of business and the rest is Visioning through questions, brainstorming, break out groups, and discussion. This allowed us to build board and volunteer capacity so we can move ahead with more projects that fulfill our mandate and create the change that best serves our communities. The call for volunteers in several areas, and the response has been very encouraging. We have attracted people to our board and volunteers that have a specific passion to restore the earth's balance, like food security or gardening in a cold climate, green energy opportunities within our community, fund raising, home retrofits, habitat restoration, etc. We were able to attract staff, board members and volunteers by aligning the passion of our community with our organizational purpose.

Our visioning sessions are a lot like the birthing process. First is the seed of the ideas that are planted in fertile minds. Then we explore all the possibilities of what can be. Then we feed and nurture the idea until it manifests.

Personally, I feel an urgency to do more and do it quickly, because of the climate emergency, food scarcity, and the exploding need for social change. The capacity our branch is building will continue to give myself and others the inspiration for a healthier, more just, and more food secure planet.

In August, Branch Manager, Andrea Chapman, returned after concluding her maternity leave. It was another transition for her to make. We are grateful to have her back. Interim Branch Manager, Corrine Highwood, is still involved in educational work with Kim Urbaniak through the Meadowbrook Education programs at Cherry Creek and McGinty Lake.

In the fall of 2021, our Outreach & Fundraising person, Courtenay Holden, left us to work for an NGO out of England that she had previously worked for. With the remaining funds, we were able to attract Trixie Pacis to our branch. She's been a real blessing to our branch, reaching out to businesses, doing a wonderful job with communications, and helping with grant writing.

Last fall, Mainstreams Environmental Society asked if we were interested in assuming their role in looking after Spooner Park, in conjunction with the City of Cranbrook. Because we have experience with the Eco Park in Marysville with a similar working relationship with the City of Kimberley, it felt like a great opportunity to get a project going in Cranbrook.

Our major fundraising event this January, the Banff Film Festival, was held in-person, at half capacity at Key City Theatre, plus there was an on-line component as well. The amazing volunteers who have organized this event for our branch for many years, are retiring and mentoring Trixie Pacis, our Communications & Fundraising Coordinator staff member. The funds from the Banff Film Festival help to support our operational and programming needs. I'd

like to thank the main volunteers, Pegg Davidson, Lorna Locke, Suzanne McAllister, Lesley Harris and Roy Cimolai for their massive contribution over the years and to all those who helped a lot in the past.

This year Allanah Leach was re-hired as the Farmers' Market Coordinator. We are in the process of hiring Ali Hadikin as Community Coordinator. She will take on the Apple Capture Program, Spooner Park, and other Cranbrook specific tasks. Chad Kile will focus on the Kimberley Community Garden, and the Backyard Farmers Project. Darko Gojsic was involved in the Community Garden and transitioning to a new Apple Capture equipment loan program among other tasks before heading off to a summer position at Mount Robson Park. Garren Lemay will be coming on our crew for July and August to help with all of our projects. We will also be hiring two additional positions for the summer months to help with Camp Odyssey summer camp in Cranbrook and Kimberley.

When assuming the position of President several years ago, there were three things I wanted to accomplish: 1) Increase our board capacity with specific expertise or areas of interest; 2) Increase our staffing capacity to support the branch manager by expanding our fund raising and community outreach; and 3) to have projects specific to Cranbrook. It is with some sense of satisfaction that I have achieved what I set out to do. Therefore, while I wish to stay on the board, I will step down as President.

I am grateful for the diversity of experience and knowledge of those I have the privilege of working with.

For the Planet,
Sharon Cross, President,
Wildsight Kimberley-Cranbrook Branch