

ROAR Conference 2015 Gayle Watters

Report #16/10/15/804

Once again I attended the ROAR conference (for 3 days) and found that again I came home with several recommendations. I stayed with family and Crystal and I car pooled in order to save some tax dollars.

My Sessions

Volunteering

This session lead with “what challenges and or frustrations do you face with your volunteers?”

The list was endless with some common to our area.

Some examples are:

- Too much training needed to volunteer
- Council approvals – seemed to turn off volunteers and delayed their starting
- Police checks- back logs in some areas (people just want to help)
- Same people volunteering
- Keeping things fresh
- Dealing with difficult people
- Commitment
- Co-ordinating
- Age gaps- lack of middle age people
- Not using peoples skills
- Personal agendas
- Intergenerational
- Politics
- Loss of resources
- Cultural differences

The two main thoughts that came from discussion here are:

1. To meet with your volunteers and listen to them. They want to know they have been heard.
2. Recognition is very important. Being appreciated can inspire further volunteering.

Senior Trends

A discussion session that opened with “what trends are the attendees seeing”?

- Land fitness – more seniors involved in fitness programs
- Active Agers – more seniors staying active
- Pickleball – things for us to consider are find a coach, set it up, get the scoring language down.

Funding

This session was led by a panel of 4 people. They included, Mike Barber – County of Renfrew, Jonathan Harris- Tourism & Industry, Francois Ontario Trillium Foundation, Carmen Gould-Ontario Government, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sports, plus.

The important points taken from this session are;

1. Although the grant may be repeated the guidelines may have changed so read the guidelines carefully.
2. Grants have a scoring theme to them, so if you need 5 examples of something give the requested number to avoid a low score.
3. Partnering with not for profit groups is a good thing
4. Update your profiles with changes in your community
5. Volunteer service awards – nominate young people
6. Elder persons Centres – funding for equipment and training
7. Elder abuse strategy – trending back up from a recent low
8. Seniors community Grant
9. Use your contacts, i.e. Mike Barber for assistance in grant application review etc.
10. Partnerships, look to accessibility grants to assist with senior needs i.e. pathways at OMP

Mental Health

This session dealt with mental health of our young people and how starting a dialogue can help remove the stigma involved. With the low numbers of youth in HCM some of this did not apply here. However the discussion was meaningful and insightful.

Recommendations I brought home:

1. Pickleball – focus on getting someone to coach us and get this up and running.
2. Paddle board – Add this to our sports interests.
3. Seniors and youth recognition; recommend a family for this this year. The Chartrand's Linda and Winston and Wade. (The Jennings family as a whole for their involvement in our community.) Letter to the minister re: a category for families.
4. Geocaching – ad a geocache site to each hamlet and advertise for visitors to explore. (OMP would be one area, Lacroix Park would work in Deux Rivières, and the Township hall area would also be a good choice.
5. Lending Sports Library – funding may be available to help set this up make equipment available to those not able to finance their own.
6. Wii fit – this may work in our environment
7. Shaw woods – this would be an excellent day trip to take to visit an existing trail to get an idea of what might work here in HCM.
8. Grant application – make sure we have updated our Grants Ontario sight (also library) make note of grant writing recommendation and reading the guidelines.
9. Website – prominent search tool, icons of corporate partners.