

District IV Governor's Report – Matthew Williams

Since stepping into the Governor role this past September, my primary focus (and that of the District IV Executive) has been to ensure our members continue to feel connected. As COVID-19 turned the world upside down, we noticed a worrying trend that many of our friends (both Gyro and otherwise) were retreating inwards. While intellectually we know that times of difficult are when we need our friends the most, this can conflict with our natural instincts to protect ourselves. Over the next 8 months, the District IV Executive undertook several initiatives to connect members in a welcoming, fun, and safe manner.

In November, the Camosun club held a special COVID-friendly Founders Night that included members from their own club, Victoria, Sidney, and Nanaimo.

In December, the District Executive provided information to club Presidents on how to run a safe Secret Santa, held a Virtual Christmas Cocktail party, and published the first edition of our new District IV Bulletin. As the number of club bulletins produced have dropped in recent years, this was seen as an opportunity to provide club updates, give notice of events, and share smiling faces from across the district.

In February, we held a special meeting of the District IV Executive to keep momentum going and the idea was raised to run a series of District-wide guest speaker events. Later that month, the Vancouver, BC club hosted guest speaker Marc Nelitz, Senior Systems Ecologist and Managing Partner of ESSA. In Marc's presentation, In Science We [Mis]Trust, he addressed the question "Why do scientists sometimes get a bad rap and what does this mean for the challenges we face in the coming decade?".

In March, the Fraser Delta club hosted David Hancock, founder of the Hancock Wildlife Foundation. In his presentation, Why the Richness of the BC Coast, David explored the history and present state of the Bald Eagle population, and shared information on the diversity and importance of the animals along the BC Coast.

In May, we held our District Interim Convention over ZOOM and announced our Lt. Governor Elect, Marc Dumais. It gives me great pride to have 2 exceptional Gyros, LTG Trevor Slaney and Marc Dumais, who have stepped forward to serve the District as future Governors.

In 2021, we did experience the unfortunate loss of the Bellingham club, which was founded in April 1981. Bellingham maintained a member count of 3 for several years, and as the club turned 40, it was deemed that the time had come to hand in their charter.

To date, I've had the great privilege of installing 5 Presidents, each of whom has shown dedication to their clubs and a keen interest to improving the District as a whole. I've been able to attend a number of regular club ZOOM events, have learned a great deal about the amazing members that make up District IV, and have made several new friends along the way. I am honoured to have been given this role and look forward to continuing to serve our great organization as Governor of District IV for my remaining months.

