

NEW GYRO EXECUTIVE FOR 2020-21

Over the past 100 years since the installation of the First Gyro President, Leon Jordan, in 1917, there has only been two instances (1941 and 1953) where an Annual Convention was not held. In Mid-March 2020 Gyro was again faced with this situation when the COVID-19 Pandemic forced the cancelation of the 2020 Convention planned for June in Victoria British Columbia. The most significant consequence of not having a Convention is that there is no election of the Executive for the next fiscal year.

On March 23, 2020, Gyro members were shocked by the sudden passing of 2nd Vice President Bryan Flanigan. This vacancy on the executive combined with the decision by the Executive Council to cancel the Convention led to a review of options for the succession of Officers for the 2020-21 year. The Gyro International By-laws have provisions for filling vacancies in positions between Conventions. In the case of a vacant Vice President position the Board of Governors can appoint a replacement. In the case of a vacant President Position the 1st Vice President becomes the President. In the case of a vacant Immediate Past President position the President may appoint a Gyro in good standing.

The next Convention is scheduled for August 2021 in Winnipeg. This meant that one option was that the current executive to remain in place until then and the vacant Vice President position would be filled by appointment. There was a second option where a Convention could occur late in 2020 which would have led to a true election – possibly with the current Officers on the slate. The Executive Council weighed the merits of these two options versus a third option of changing the Executive in May-June 2020. Key considerations favoring a new executive being installed in 2020 were:

- The current Officers preferred that their original schedule for holding office be adhered to so that their commitments within and outside Gyro were able to be met.
- Future candidates for office would not be delayed a year. Instead two Vice Presidents would be appointed in 2020.

On May 13, 2020 the Board of Governors ratified a succession plan for putting new Officers in place for 2020-21. The change in Officers occurred at that meeting as follows:

1. Matthew Johnson resigned as Immediate Past President.
2. Ted Shewchuk resigned as President.
3. Alan Pentney moved from 1st Vice President to President.
4. President Alan Pentney appointed Ted Shewchuk as Immediate Past President.
5. The Board of Governors accepted the recommendations of the Nominating Committee for two Vice President positions based on interviews of candidates conducted by electronic means, and appointed:
 - a. Blanton Bessinger, Past District Governor District VII, as 1st Vice President
 - b. Peter Carter, Past District Governor District VIII, as 2nd Vice President

The installation of these Officers and Secretary Treasurer Michael McNally occurred on June 2, 2020 by means of a Zoom gathering with Matthew Johnson, Past International President, officiating. The business of governing the organization resumed on June 17, 2020 with a Board of Governors meeting to address a new budget and other topics to serve the members of Gyro.

The unusual circumstances that led to the cancellation of the Convention was disappointing for all Gyros because face to face meetings to conduct business is preferred, the involvement of Club delegates in business at the annual general meeting is important and the celebration of a change in officers is a fun event where members look forward to renewing friendships and forging new ones. All some things I am looking forward to at the 2021 Convention in Winnipeg!

Alan Pentney
President