



## **2025 St. Catharines Rowing Club Annual Meeting of the Members President's Report for 2024 calendar year**

2024 was a good year for the club. RCA recently published its Annual Report that showed for the second consecutive year the St. Catharines Rowing Club is the largest club in country with 748 registered participants for the year 2023. (This number includes students who rowed for their respective high schools and the Rowing League members). For the period 2022 our number was 610. For 2018 we had 927 participants. Thus, we are continuing to grow back to our pre-COVID numbers. Growth does not happen by itself. It takes people and money. People to run the programmes and money to purchase and maintain the equipment.

We have the people: a number of talented and dedicated coaches who spend many, many hours training athletes; athletes who strive to be champions and often succeed; a supportive group of volunteers for boathouse projects, at regattas, on committees and on the club's board of directors. Thank you to all and especially to the directors and officers for your support for the past twelve months.

### Directors & Officers

Chris Blackwood – Secretary	Kate Hingston – VP Special Projects	Marianne Romak -Director
Andrew Carr – Director	Travis King – Director	Heather Talbot - Director
Brian Fisher – VP Finance	Janet Lancaster – VP Rowing	Brian Thorne – VP Membership
Michele Fisher – Director	Stephanie Mowder – Director	Dave Winslade - Director
Louise Hastings – VP Fundraising	Christina Philipps – Director	

### Officers

Karl Bowley & Wendy Wiebe – Co-Treasurers

The vice presidents and officers will be reporting on the successes in their respective portfolios and plans for the coming year.

Two directors are stepping off the board after serving for three years: Andrew Carr and Dave Winslade. We thank Andrew for bringing the skills and insights learned in the construction business that helped in the replacement of the boathouse floor and for his dedication to coaching. And we thank Dave who brought experience leading a board of volunteers in the sport of hockey and kept our social media functioning. Former director Sam Baio and committee member Stephanie Robinson have agreed to let their names stand for election to the board to replace Andrew and Dave.

Co-Treasurer Wendy Wiebe, who has been handling our bookkeeping tasks and an HR role for the past five years will be stepping down in the very near future. She will stay on as we transition to a paid bookkeeper. We thank Wendy very much for her dedication to keep the club's accounts accurate and to be able to provide timely financial information.

Our Equipment Manager, Aaron Thompson, has decided on a career change that starts this week as he becomes a "Team Lead" at Goodwill Niagara, part of a 110-year-old not-for-profit organization. We thank Aaron for his work with the club and wish him every success in his new role.

Four individuals in particular, deserve recognition for their volunteer work:

Peter Somerwil stepped up to the plate, as it were, and volunteered to fill the role of Club Captain last spring. He successfully took us through the high school and club seasons, navigated the World Championships and finished the fall club season – and has agreed to stay on as Captain! Thank you Peter!

Matt Hingston continues to apply his skills as a custom metal fabricator with the help he is providing to complete the wishes of Jim Minards by installing new boat racks on the new floor in the '66 boathouse. Thank you Matt!

Scott Anderson keeps our website looking good! This is an artful skill. Thank you Scott!

Erin Sharpe, our manager of youth programmes volunteers to oversee two key activities that bring youth to our sport: the youth rowing camp and the Junior development programme, while she maintains her status as competitive masters rower. Thank you Erin!

As noted above, the club needs money in addition to people to be successful. Rowing organizations on the Island helped us as did people in the greater community. This past year the St. Catharines Rowing Alumni Association helped twice with funds to pay for entries for U19 athletes competing at two regattas in the States. The Henley Island Helpers supported the club to purchase outboard motors and rowing equipment. A donor bought us a racing shell. People donated money to the club in memory of Marilyn Hainer. In 2024 the club entered a mutually beneficial Hosting Agreement with the St. Catharines Rowing League.

We start 2025 with optimism. Today, we welcome Greg Szybka as our new Head Coach! The board has approved a membership fee schedule that is progressive in its plan to enable the club to grow and to continue to provide more services to its members. I ask all members to support the proposed fee schedule.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Derry

President,

St. Catharines Rowing Club