



DESERT PARK NEWSLETTER

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# Happy Holidays From Desert Park!

Season's Greetings from our horses to your homes!

It's an exciting time to be a part of the Desert Park Exhibition Society, and we're not just talking about the time of year. While Desert Park truly is lovely during the holiday season, with the way the park looks after a dusting of snow, and the joy we get when we set out the decorations, it's what's going on behind the scenes at Desert Park that we find so exciting. We think you'll agree.

We hope everyone is staying safe and healthy during these complex and unprecedented times. Here's an update on what's been going on at Desert Park since the July 29th AGM.





## Board Update

- Bobbie Fischer resigned from the Board in September. We thank Bobbie for her service to Desert Park and appreciate her assistance with knowledge transfer to the new Board.
- Lee McLeod was appointed to the Board in September – thank you Lee for stepping in to help!

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- Andrea Cruickshank has moved away and resigned from the Board in November. We wish Andrea and her family all the best for the future.
  - Your Desert Park Exhibition Society Board is comprised of:
    - Tom Shields, President
    - Rod Trites, Vice-President
    - Jason Orban, Treasurer
    - Dorothy Paukste, Secretary
    - Sherry Zarowny
    - Lee McLeod

## Gratitude and Appreciation

- Gina Mazzie resigned from her position as Site Manager in August. We thank Gina for her service and wish her the best of luck in future endeavours
- Carrie Hauser is our new Site Manager – thank you for all of your hard work over the last several months keeping everything organized and beautifying Desert Park!
- Jocelyn Merit continues as Desert Park’s accountant – thank you for your attention to detail and keeping the finances in order!
- Norm Fitzgerald continues as Desert Park’s Track Manager and has been working hard on various maintenance projects we’ve undertaken this Fall.
- We had a great turnout for the Puncture Vine picking party on August 29th and have held a couple of small work parties this Fall – thank you to all volunteers!

## Desert Park Housekeeping

- We are in the midst of a maintenance project for Barn C as well as re-building the round pens. This work will be completed in January.
- We have undertaken a project to ensure safety standards are being adhered to and electrical code compliance for Barns A, B, C, D, and E; this is scheduled for January.
- The RV water and sewer connections are being upgraded; this work should be completed in early 2021.
- The Board found a local business to purchase and haul away the manure
- Desert Park will be applying for grants and financial assistance from various levels of government for the above-mentioned maintenance projects. The Board is also approaching local businesses for corporate sponsorship opportunities.
- Formal Job Descriptions have been created for both the Site Manager and the Track Manager positions.
- The Board is revising the horse boarding and RV agreements to ensure clarity, comprehensiveness and compliance.

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- Desert Park will be introducing a Respectful Workplace Policy in the New Year which will apply to everyone on site at Desert Park: horse boarders & trainers, RV residents, staff, visitors, Board members, and volunteers.
  - The Board is creating Arena Rules & Safety Procedures which will be applicable to everyone using the arena at Desert Park.
  - A 2021 budget has been drafted and the Board resolved some long term debt issues in 2020.
  - A One Year Tactical Plan has been created which is a To Do list for various tasks that must be completed in order to improve operations. A 3-year Strategic Plan is under development.
  - The Board is making a presentation to Town Council at the end of January to provide a status update and discuss 2021 plans.

## Need To Know

- Desert Park has a new website! Check it out here: <https://desertpark.ca/>
- You can also check us out on [Facebook!](#)
- Don't forget to renew your Desert Park membership! Use the attached form or email us at [info@desertpark.ca](mailto:info@desertpark.ca).
- The Desert Park 2021 AGM will be scheduled for the Spring – we will keep you posted on the date as soon as we determine it is safe to hold the meeting.

## The future of Desert Park is looking bright

With 2020 quickly coming to a close, it has been an interesting year, to put it mildly, and we are looking to the future and the opportunities that Desert Park holds. With a renewed vision we are paving the way for Desert Park and our members to build a legacy in our community.

In fact, 2020 has revealed some real advantages for Desert Park.

Being Canada's only year-round training facility, with a 5/8ths mile race track, we are looking forward to a full house in the spring of 2021. Horse owners and trainers from across Canada (who would typically go down to the US) are moving their horses to Osoyoos for the 2021 training season.

This means Desert Park is getting more exposure and being given the opportunity to put our best "hoof" forward when it comes to impressing new trainers and owners. All of whom we are hoping will be back for years to come. This is why we are using this opportunity to update our facilities, round pens, and services at Desert Park.



We are very excited to see where this can lead as we upgrade stalls, fix barns, and welcome new trainers, horses, and owners to Desert Park.

## Restoring Desert Park's Vibrant Past

Not only are we attending to much-needed maintenance around the park, but we are also looking to the future by reimagining the past.

Desert Park has beautiful views and is one of the best locations in all of Osoyoos. We overlook the mountains and the lake, we have a huge and impressive infield, we have grandstands and emerald green grass, and a gorgeous race track.

In its heyday, Desert Park was known for horse racing, racing events, festivals, and outdoor concerts. We feel with the right direction and a little elbow grease, it can be known for those things (or at least some of them) again.

Just recently the board at Desert Park put in an application for funding to acquire two new portable events stages. Not only would those stages put Desert Park on the map as a much sought-after concert and event destination but they will also provide a new stream of revenue for the Desert Park Exhibition Society.

Imagine driving down Anarchist mountain and seeing a light show across the valley with a concert playing, drawing thousands of visitors to Osoyoos. Imagine standing anywhere in Osoyoos and feeling the energy of an exciting concert filling the night sky.

With more local support we can bring live events back to Osoyoos, and put ourselves at the forefront of live music and events in the Okanagan. Of course this will all proceed with the go-ahead from Interior Health once they deem it is safe.

Until then, we are investigating the idea of hosting drive-in movies, and equestrian and community events. All of these are in the exploratory phases but if we can continue to make the kind of progress we have been making in the last 6 months, then I think it is a very exciting time for Desert Park, Osoyoos, and our members.

Season's Greetings and Happy New Year from the entire Board of Directors at Desert Park!

*Tom, Rod, Jason, Dorothy, Sherry & Lee*

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)