

**Fernie Pride Society
Annual General Meeting
March 25, 2019**



The FERNIE PRIDE SOCIETY supports and connects the LGBTQ community in the Elk Valley. Incorporated in December 2016, the Society is a hub for LGBTQ people and their allies, programming special events as well as providing resource referrals.

Our vision is that the Elk Valley will be a safe, inclusive community for LGBTQ people celebrating our uniqueness and diversity.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Sara Funk, President
- Kevin Allen, Secretary
- Jennifer Gardiner, Director
- Jennifer Asselin, Director
- Melissa Creelman, Director
- Virginie Closson, Director

Annual Report: January 1 to December 31, 2018

The Fernie Pride Society Board of Directors worked hard this year to proliferate Pride in the Elk Valley. Here are just a few of the things we achieved!

General Business

- The board of directors met monthly over the course of the year to make governance decisions and run the programs and initiatives of the organization.
- Each month we hosted an outreach event called Beers & Queers. This event has been instrumental in connecting LGBTQ2+ individuals from all over the Elk Valley and has been a safer space for people looking for support and social interaction.
- We met individually with people from the LGBTQ2+ community in need of support, who weren't comfortable with the visibility of public outreach events.
- We applied to various organizations for funding for Fernie Pride and the Elk Valley Pride Festival.
- We used our social media platforms to share stories, authors, youth camps, workshops, events, and festivals to give our local community better access to needed resources.
- We worked closely with youth to try and create programming and spaces for them in the Elk Valley.

January

- The resource and referral page on the Fernie Pride Society website was updated.

February

- Two Directors were sent to Calgary to participate in learning workshops at the Fierthe Canada Pride annual conference and AGM. There they made connections and shared information with other Pride organizations across the country.

March

- We marched as a part of the Griz Days parade in Fernie. 12 people of all ages, including allies, marched down 2nd Avenue in Fernie handing out flags and stickers.
- In partnership with the REEL Canadian Film Festival group we brought queer film Call Me By Your Name to the Vogue Theatre; over 50 people attended.

April

- We hired Lori Bradish to co-ordinate the Elk Valley Pride Festival.

May

- We created a vision and made community connections for the Elk Valley Pride Festival.

June

- We partnered with Tourism Fernie and Fernie Chamber of Commerce to bring educator and President of Calgary Pride Jason Kingsley to Fernie. 25 people attending this training which consisted of LGBTQ2+ 101 education, transgender education, and a component on Gay Tourism and what that looks like locally.
- We participated in the annual Dumpster Painting competition hosted by The Arts Station in Fernie. Local ally and artist Pruthvi Harshan painted a beautiful dumpster for Fernie Pride that now lives behind the College of the Rockies building on 4th Street.
- We hosted an information table at the Diversity at Your Doorstep event hosted by CBAL (Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy).
- We spoke with property owner Simon Howse regarding Brad's Gay Trail in Fernie.

July

- At the request of the Wapiti music festival board of directors Fernie Pride volunteer Taryn McKenna provided an LGBTQ2+ 101 education session for festival organizers and local hotels and bars.
- Calgary Sexual Health presented a consent and sexual harassment workshop in tandem with the Fernie Pride session, which was attended by two Fernie Pride Directors.
- We assisted CBAL in amending their intake forms to be more LGBTQ2+ inclusive.
- The Fernie Heritage library created a new system to catalogue LGBTQ2+ books and other materials. The system sorts books by the keyword LGBTQ; this keyword is entirely searchable online or by using the desktop computer catalogue in the library, making LGBTQ2+ books and materials easier to find locally. We love those librarians!
- We placed an ad in the Fernie Free Press in response to the anti-inclusion and anti-diversity Letters to the Editor published in the paper, which specifically targeted the LGBTQ2+ community

August

- At the request of Fierthe Canada Pride we submitted a letter to our member of Parliament, supporting their bid to create federal funding for Pride organizations across Canada.

September

- We hosted an info booth at the annual Chautauqua Fall Fair for Fernie Pride and the Elk Valley Pride Festival.
- We sent festival co-ordinator Lori Bradish to Calgary Pride to promote Fernie Pride and the Elk Valley Pride Festival. She was joined at the booth by our volunteer of the year Gordon Sombrowski.

September (cont...)

- We were nominated for a Spirit of Fernie 2018 Fernie Business Excellence award.
- We attended and had input into the Fernie Tourism Master Plan.

October

- Fernie Pride hosted the second annual 2018 Elk Valley Pride festival. The 5 day event saw growth from the year before, going from just over 400 people to just over 700 people in attendance.
- We hosted another pre-festival education session for small business owners; this time with volunteer Gordon Sombrowski presenting.

- One of the main focuses for this year's festival over the prior year was to ensure more all-ages programming, and to ensure that the bulk of festival programming could be accessed at little to no cost for members of the community.
- We hosted an information table at the Not For Kids Social at the Fernie Heritage Library.

November

- We rested.

December

- For the December Beers & Queers we hosted a special Beers & Queers & Jingle All The Way event for the holidays.

Year-at-a-Glance: January 1 to December 31, 2019

The board met early in the year to plan for 2019; here are a few things we are doing this year.

The Future's So Bright!

- One of the challenges we face is trying to find volunteers for the Board of Directors. In 2019 we will have a focus on getting new Directors to the board.
- We are looking to potentially hire admin support for the Society, as we are currently at capacity in the people power department.
- If we are able to free up some time and energy in our people power department we believe it's time to focus on board development and training so the board is better able to serve the Society, the membership, and the LGBTQ2+ community.
- In 2018 national Pride organization Fierté Canada Pride petitioned the federal government for more financial support for Prides, and they got it! In the 2019 budget there is an additional 20 million dollars specifically for Pride societies around the country. We will be taking the time to look into this and how it could apply to us!
- We are constantly updating and adding new resources to our web page.
- We would like to make more inroads with local youth, including a monthly youth group.
- Beers & Queers will continue as a monthly outreach and networking event.
- We are partnering with Miss Ellen Q to bring her one woman play and Drag Queen extravaganza to Fernie!
- We have been in discussion with the RCMP regarding their Safe Space Program.
- We are donating LGBTQ2+ themed books to the Fernie Heritage Library to be a part of their collection.
- We are marching with the Fernie Women's Resource Centre on International Women's Day to support their efforts to end the violence against women, and to bring awareness to the community that LGBTQ2+ women suffer violence as well, often at higher rates and with greater lethality.
- We will continue to make connections with other Pride organizations, sharing our resources so there is more for our local community to access.
- We are meeting with United Church representative Tif McNaughton; they are interested in education so that they can become an affirming church.
- We will be looking at the potential of painting another Pride dumpster in June.
- We will have tables again this year at the CBAL cultural fair and the September Chautauqua events.
- We will be looking at bringing an educator to Fernie again this year.
- We will host the Elk Valley Pride Festival again this year.
- In October one of our directors will be going to Greece to attend the Inter-Pride conference and AGM. Montreal Pride is making a bid to host the Inter-Pride (World Pride) conference and AGM in 2021, and have invited one of our group to be a representative from BC for their bid.
- On November 20th we will be holding a candle light vigil for International Transgender Day of Remembrance.
- In December we will host another holiday event for the LGBTQ2+ community.
- In December we are looking at potentially starting a new outreach and support group for the LGBTQ2+ community, with a professional facilitator who can better serve the needs of the community.