



# **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORT**

March 2024

*GOLD COUNTRY  
COMMUNITIES SOCIETY*

## REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

2023 was a funny, not funny, year. So let's just call it a "learning experience" and leave it at that. We were patting ourselves on the back for surviving Covid-19 when TNRD Areas M and N departed just before the end of 2020. Merritt had already left. The financial impacts of these members leaving was never really discussed by the board. Instead, the remaining members were just asked to pay more.

In February 2022, we bid farewell to our Chief Executive Officer Marcie Down. Local Government elections took place later in October and a wave of dissention replaced two-thirds of our board of directors. Added to that, property assessments on which the TNRD had based its tax requisition soared, raising the membership financial requirements for members – some of whom had never been to a Gold Country meeting. And then there were those unsolicited emails from a former contractor to everyone, demanding money that she wasn't owed.

By the end of January, Area J had announced that it was leaving Gold Country, followed by Area I, Area E, Clinton and Ashcroft. Cache Creek, Lillooet, Logan Lake and Lytton remained, but even they were wondering whether being a member was worth it. At the end of March, our Marketing Manager Brandy Cooper-Chardon resigned and it seemed like the final nail. April and May were bleak months for this organization that had served the region since 1991, and I was asked several times over this period: "Is Gold Country shutting down?" My response was always, "Not yet."

A chance meeting with Cache Creek Visitor Information Centre genius and former Gold Country employee Kat Chatten outside of the Village Office one day led to an informal conversation about the state of Gold Country and the possibility of filling in the manager's position, at least temporarily. The rest is a matter of record, and a contract was approved by the board and signed in June. The unfathomable chaos that had been left by previous managers was straightened out; project funders were asked for extensions until the project paper trails had been pieced together; financial paperwork was tracked down over three years and more until it finally added up; debts were paid – including the CEBA loan taken out in 2020 and due at the beginning of this year; outstanding projects were completed; and a new and much more reasonable membership fee structure was presented to the membership. It included two options – full membership and only membership in the geocache program. And perhaps the best news to come out of 2023 is that we finished the year with money in the bank.

This past year has been about baby steps and restoring our members' faith in Gold Country's ability to represent their interests to the region, the country and the world, and to operate within a leaner and more reasonable budget. By doing so, we hope to prove that we can offer strong, reliable programs that will bring visitors back to our beautiful communities, attract our former members back (Merritt has already agreed to pay for the geocache program!), and contribute to the economic stability of the Gold Country region.

Let us all work together to keep our region one of the most popular destinations for travellers everywhere!

Wendy Coomber, Chair  
Gold Country Communities Society

# Projects

## *ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS*

### Tourism Recovery Project- Geocache Prequel Project

The prequel project was wrapped up with reporting completed in 2023. This project saw the creation of 50 new geocaches and an in-person event in the summer of 2022.

### Membership Remodel

The Board of Directors developed a new membership model for Gold Country that better aligns with the mission and goals of the organization.

### TNRD Grant Writing Contract

The Executive Director offered grant writing services to organizations in the TNRD area. Over \$523,000 in grants were submitted in 2023 for this project.

### Geocaching Complete Volume

A geocaching guide that contains all of Phase 1, 2, and the prequel geocaches has been designed and is now available digitally and online.

### Office Digitization Project

Gold Country office files and past reporting has been diligently scanned and stored online to reduce the office clutter and better secure the storage of files. Gold Country admin staff have shredded and recycled HALF A TONNE of materials in this project.

# Goals

## 2024 STRATEGIC GOALS

### Familiarization Tour

Provide a Fam Tour spotlighting attractions, historic sites, accommodations, and tourism touchpoints for industry professionals and community ambassadors. This initiative aims to boost knowledge and enthusiasm among frontline employees and volunteers.

### Tourism Symposium

Host an event in conjunction with Excellence in Gold Country that offers engaging panel discussions and interactive workshops for Tourism Owners and Operators. This event promises valuable networking opportunities and actionable insights.

### Excellence in Gold Country

Excellence in Gold Country is a fun evening dinner dedicated to celebrating the finest local businesses. Join us as we honor the crowd-sourced best-in-category winners, showcasing excellence across various sectors in our community. It's a night to recognize and applaud the remarkable achievements of our local entrepreneurs and contributors.

### Geocaching Events

Fun, free family-friendly events held in several Gold Country Communities to showcase the unique attractions and businesses while celebrating Gold Country Geocaching GeoTour.

## 2024 STRATEGIC GOALS CONT.

### New Website

Create a new, user-friendly website to enhance our organization's online presence and improve engagement with our audience.

### Trail Guide

Develop a comprehensive trail guide showcasing a diverse range of trails in our area, promoting outdoor exploration and highlighting the natural beauty of our region.

### Community Events

Participate in community events to actively promote businesses in Gold Country through our publications and geocaching program; fostering local engagement and supporting economic growth.

### Update Image Bank

Recreate the Gold Country image bank by incorporating new photos and videos while enhancing its user-friendliness, ensuring a seamless experience for accessing and utilizing visual assets to showcase our region's charm and appeal.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
2023 PROFIT AND LOSS

## Profit and Loss

### Gold Country

Date Range: Nov 01, 2022 to Oct 31, 2023

ACCOUNTS	Nov 01, 2022 to Oct 31, 2023
<b>Income</b>	
ASET EMPLOYEE SUPPORT	\$4,760.00
DBC 23 24 GRANT	\$15,200.00
DBC MISC	\$32,368.35
Grant- Rural Dividends	\$5,227.38
Program Income – Program Service Fees	\$27,183.76
Sales	\$185.67
TERM DEPOSIT	\$11,600.38
TOURISM RECOVERY	\$43,144.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$139,669.54</b>
<b>Total Cost of Goods Sold</b>	
	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$139,669.54</b>
As a percentage of Total Income	100.00%
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	
7 celebrations	\$600.00
Bank Fee	\$18.00
Contract Services	\$16,623.95
Equipment Lease or Rental	\$2,520.00
Insurance – Property	\$1,984.00

*FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
2023 PROFIT AND LOSS CONT.*

<b>Operating Expenses</b>	
Membership	\$374.42
Office Supplies	\$927.46
Payroll – Salary & Wages	\$36,141.28
Project expenses	\$20,560.14
Promotional	\$22,266.43
Remittances	\$10,232.65
Rent Expense	\$7,087.50
Susie Studio2Design	\$10,000.00
Telephone – Land Line	\$689.28
Telephone – Wireless	\$2,236.49
Utilities	\$1,604.40
WorkBC	\$777.11
amazon	\$4,031.44
storage rent	\$900.00
tradeshow	\$879.37
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$140,453.92</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	
As a percentage of Total Income	<b>-\$784.38</b> -0.56%

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### Balance Sheet

#### Gold Country

As of Jan 31, 2024

ACCOUNTS	Jan 31, 2024
<b>Assets</b>	
Total Cash and Bank	\$115,772.96
Total Other Current Assets	\$0.00
Total Long-term Assets	\$0.00
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$115,772.96</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Total Current Liabilities	-\$3,006.50
Total Long-term Liabilities	\$0.00
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>-\$3,006.50</b>
<b>Equity</b>	
Total Other Equity	\$0.00
Total Retained Earnings	\$118,779.46
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$118,779.46</b>