

# RLOP Public Survey

## Summary

The public was surveyed in three major campaigns – the audience at *Finding A Wife for Gino* (February 2018); the shoppers at Ferraro's in both Trail and Rossland, plus an online survey. In total, 112 responses were received.

Over 80% of the respondents had seen at least one RLOP production. This number is likely skewed in favour of high audience numbers because the survey included the audience at *Gino*. 40% of those surveyed had seen 4 or more shows. Less than one fifth of the respondents had never seen a show.

## Non-audience (18 responses)

Of those who had never seen an RLOP show, the most common reason was lack of information either about the RLOP or about the shows. Alarming, half of the non-audience respondents hadn't even heard of the RLOP and of those who did know about the RLOP, a third couldn't find information about RLOP shows. All respondents live in the West Kootenays, with nearly half from Trail and a quarter from Rossland.

Reasons for not seeing a show included factors over which the RLOP has no control, such as other commitments, lack of time, need for childcare and preference for other forms of entertainment. Two people cited location of the shows as a reason for not attending because they live out-of-town.

Of those who have never seen an RLOP production, most are 46 - 64 years of age. A third are over 65 years of age and a fifth are between 25 and 45 years old.

Encouragingly, over three quarters of these respondents were curious enough about the RLOP to ask to be put on the mailing list.

## Audience (94 responses)

This segment of the respondents has seen an RLOP production. The overwhelming majority found the last show they had seen to have exceeded or greatly exceeded expectation.

## Demographics

Most audience members (42%) are 46 - 64 years of age. Second largest group is 65+ years of age and third largest group 25 - 45 years old. Almost half come from Rossland and a third from Trail with significantly fewer people from the surrounding area (Castlegar, Beaver Valley, etc.). Well over half of these respondents asked to be put on a list for information about future shows.

## Satisfaction with shows

Audience satisfaction is very high. 87% of the respondent's rate RLOP shows as Exceeding or Greatly Exceeding Expectation.

## Publicity - 91 respondents

Over half the audience hear about shows through word-of-mouth, including through family and friends. Posters come second and the newspapers third. Social media is also common. Least mentioned are the radio, city message boards and RLOP email. The Trail Arts Society, including the Bailey emails and website, was a written-in response by five people. Three people mentioned the Glee Club as a means of learning about an RLOP show due to the Glee's involvement in *Gino*. Only one person mentioned the RLOP handout given during the Winter Carnival parade.

### **What did you enjoy most about the RLOP shows? - 88 respondents**

The dominant theme is the fact that they are locally produced. "Local talent" is mentioned again and again. There is pleasure in seeing family, friends and acquaintances onstage. People take pride in local talent, and "..... appreciate the hard work and enjoy supporting amateur shows." This contributes to "better connection to people in the area and their showmanship." The quality and professionalism of the productions were frequently praised. "The acting and talent and singing were incredible "Most elements of show production were mentioned, from storyline and music, to costumes and sets.

The entertainment aspect of the shows is highly appreciated, particularly humour, but also "(t)he passion and (sic) pure fun our local people put into it! " Audience engagement, the enthusiasm of the actors, and the fact that it is live entertainment were all mentioned by audience members. And the creativity behind the shows was recognized by a few.

### **What did you enjoy least? - 57 responses**

Nearly half of the respondents declared that they had no complaints. Many even declared that the shows were "all good!"

The majority of complaints focused on the quality of sound. Some people specifically mentioned equipment failure, while most said there were times when the actors could not be heard. "Sound sometimes muffled, ""can't always hear everything," ".....sometimes sound is not the best. "

Less frequent complaints included show choice, venue, quality of acting/singing/ orchestra; or length of show. Also mentioned were set change delays, and the desire for nicer props.

### **Show Preference**

Broadway classics were the favourite show type by far. Contemporary musicals were a distant second – top choice for 11 people, vs 59 people choosing Broadway classics. Interestingly, while very few people chose Light Opera as their top choice, it was the second most popular choice. Rock musicals were also a very popular second choice (18 people, vs. 20 who chose Light Opera as their second choice). The preference for Christmas shows and Children's shows was comparatively low -- Christmas shows were top choice for only one person; Children's shows top choice for 7 and second choice for one.

### **What has kept you from attending an RLOP show? (72 responses)**

The most common reason for missing RLOP shows is other commitments, or the shows presented were not of interest. Nearly 14 people said they either didn't know about the RLOP or they didn't have information about the shows. Children were cited by 7 respondents. Venue accessibility was a

problem for some, specifically parking. Other factors included living out-of-town, excessive show length and simple forgetfulness. Nothing stops 4 people from seeing our shows.

### **Is there anything else you would like to tell us? (6 responses)**

Unfortunately, this question was omitted on the paper version of the survey (fire the typist!) so only 6 responses were recorded. Most people felt that publicity was fine, noting that “Advertising is good,” “already get info on Facebook,” “The kids will tell me.” One person asked for shorter shows “They’re always too long.”

### **Conclusion**

There is very strong audience support for the RLOP. The audience greatly appreciates what we offer. They are proud of the local talent, impressed by the quality and appreciative of the work that goes into each show.

Publicity reaches our established audience. However, there is a need to find those who do not know the RLOP. During the public survey, half of those who knew nothing of the RLOP, agreed to be put on an email list. This indicates that once people hear of the RLOP, they are curious to learn more. The RLOP needs to introduce itself to newcomers to the area – one woman met during the survey at Trail Ferraro’s was delighted to hear about the organization, as she had just moved to the area and has theatrical experience. A well-developed email list would be an invaluable tool in reaching potential audience as well as maintaining contact with existing audience supporters.

Other ideas for making the RLOP better known might be a parade float with an assortment of characters from musicals even in the years when the Mainstage production has not been chosen. Video interviews with members talking about why they joined the RLOP could be posted on the RLOP website, Facebook page, YouTube etc. to create a greater sense of community among members.

Knowing where our audience comes from gives the RLOP leverage in applying for any available regional grants. The fact that many of our members, and nearly half of our audience comes from Rossland has undoubtedly helped the RLOP obtain city tax relief. With one third of our audience (and an unknown portion of our membership) from Trail, the RLOP can look for ways for the City of Trail to support us.

## **RLOP Members 2018 Survey**

### **Summary**

The majority of the membership was surveyed online. Some individuals may have also filled out the Public Survey at the February performance of *Finding A Wife for Gino*. Any RLOP members encountered during the public survey at Ferraro’s were asked to complete the RLOP Members Survey online.

In total, 52 out of 130 members completed the online survey. Twenty-five were active members (defined as those who had participated in an RLOP production within the past year – potentially 75 people, including students) and 27 were non-active members.

## **Demographics**

Most respondents were female – varying between one half (active members) to two-thirds (non-active members). Active members tended to be younger than non-active. A large majority of non-active members who responded were between the ages of 46 and 65, whereas active members were more evenly spread through ages 16 - 65. Members were not asked for their place of residence (but should have been, see comment on preceding page re: regional grants).

## **Show Experience**

Many people chose more than one experience as most enjoyable. Both active and non-active members ranked “Being part of a show” as the most enjoyable experience in an RLOP show. Active members placed “Being creative” second; non-active members put “Doing a good theatrical job” second. Very few members, active or non-active, chose to reveal their least enjoyable experience, suggesting either that none of the options was suitable, or that they found their experience with the RLOP shows to be generally enjoyable. Some active members did cite “Other” as least enjoyable, but the survey format didn’t allow them to describe what they meant.

## **Publicity**

The greatest number of active members heard about the last show they took part in through friend or family. However, RLOP publicity venues, including Facebook, website and email list were also major sources of information. Happenstance also played a role, “Walked past the Bodega one day,” “called to see if I could help.”

## **Show Preference**

Again, it appears that many people chose more than one option as their most preferred.

For active members, Comedy followed by Romantic Comedy were the top ranked preferences, with other show types further behind. In contrast, non-active members ranked Light Opera as their most preferred, with Romantic Comedy, Drama and Comedy all vying for second place. Both groups of members were least interested in Christmas shows.

## **Show Elements**

A stark difference showed between active and non-active members with regards to the most important elements of a show. Active members saw the script as the most important element by a wide margin, with music in second place. Non-active members saw music as most important and sets as second.

## **Least favourite experience**

Responses to this question were combined with the answers to “What is the most important thing the RLOP can do to make your next show experience better?” as they shared common themes. It can also be argued that something identified as ‘least enjoyable’ is an element in most need of improvement. 80 - 100% of respondents, both active and non-active members, had a response to either or both questions.

Several members said that there was nothing that they either didn't like or saw a need to improve. A handful made a point of saying "everything was great," "my show experience this year was fantastic!" "I don't think I ever had a bad experience with RLOP."

Nonetheless, most people had something to say. Three main themes emerged.

### **Theme 1 - People - either relationships between people or factors affecting a single person.**

The majority of comments concerned attitudes and behaviour found within cast and crew. The unreliability of members to either show up for rehearsal or put in the effort necessary to learn their parts was particularly aggravating. Most comments came from non-active members (7 from non-active vs 3 from active members). "Lack of focus/attention during rehearsals leading to under preparedness at week of show; this makes the show less strong, and therefore less fun!" "Too much goofing off."

Active members mentioned "(n)egative people, especially people being rude..." and "Bickering amongst cast."

"Unwillingness of certain members to contribute positively and spending most of their time complaining, being difficult, or not using the limited time we had for rehearsals on unimportant matters (sic.) "[We assume this member meant "using the limited time we had... on unimportant matters."]

There was also a call for better communications.

"...foster a culture of open communications among team members, transparency, teamwork, cooperation, mutual support."

"Welcome newcomers"

The relationship between RLOP Board and Production team was singled out for mention.

"The lack of support from the executive and the nitpicking and stress some executive members added to the production"

Personal development was of interest to some members, both active and non-active.

"I would like to be challenged by my director to grow and learn and so I would like to see professional directors so they can be held to a higher standard."

".... director can tell me how to make my performance better. need to be more bossy."

"I would have loved to have had a larger role so that I could work on building my character; this would have expanded my theatrical knowledge and skills."

Some members gained personal insights.

"I tried directing and it was definitely not for me!"

"Having responsibility for duties I didn't know how to fulfill, .... the upside was finding I was able to meet that challenge, though perhaps not as well as I would have liked."

Then there were the things the RLOP has no control over.

"I have noticed my enthusiasm for doing drama has waned. I suppose it is an age thing...."

"Makeup new and itchy"

"Long drive from Castlegar"

## **Theme 2 - the Show, particularly show choice**

Here we find conflicting opinions from “do another G&S!” to “I know G&S is free, but it doesn’t resonate much with a modern audience, so I’m not as interested in being involved.” There were calls for large-scale Broadway-style productions and also openness towards “racier” shows such as *Gino*, or small-scale plays which could generate income for the larger shows as well as serve to maintain interest within the performing community. And several active and non-active members asked to keep live orchestral accompaniment.

Scheduling of the mainstage production came under criticism.

“Timing of the performance – right after Christmas – during the flue (sic) season - everyone is run down and there is always lots of sickness among the cast and crew.”

Also “Stop skipping a year...Build on momentum. don’t follow a huge show with nothing and then a small show no one has ever heard of...”

Show planning was mentioned by some non-active members. “Plan ahead! Which it looks like you’re doing for 2019, so bravo!” “Plan the show - all aspects of it- WELL in advance.” And funding for the show was mentioned by active members “Have a good reserve of funding secured before production starts to take pressure off show producer so she/he can focus on building the creative team.” “...spend the money to make the money....”

## **Theme 3 - Time, especially time management**

The overwhelming call was for better scheduling of rehearsals so that cast time was not wasted. Members did not like “waiting around for my parts to rehearse” or “...showing up when not needed” and asked for “more organization from the director/production team so that rehearsals start on time....”

Other time concerns included rehearsal times that conflicted with other commitments

There were also miscellaneous comments on technical aspects such as “working with out of date equipment.” Lack of manpower or lack of support “... to move tympani, drums, stands, keyboard and accessories,” was also mentioned.

Some people wanted to send encouraging messages to the RLOP Board.

“Just want to say that I think the current executive seems to be doing everything they can to keep RLOP going and I’m grateful for that. It seems the struggles are perennially the same, from finding an accompanist/music director with time on their hands, to finding enough men, and in having enough young members of talent that remain in the area, to keep the mill turning. Maybe a good newspaper/radio interview session talking about the organization and it’s (sic) brilliant history, and calling out for members, done by a charismatic and articulate person with sincere love and little ego? (Tanya would be my recommendation)”

“I am not currently living in the area, but the RLOP was a huge influence in my development as a playwright and theatre enthusiast.”

## **Participation Level**

Different patterns show between active and non-active members. Among active members, it is the

younger ones who are willing to participate in shows at least once a year, whereas the older members (46+ and older) are happy to participate once a year or less. Among non-active members, nearly all prefer to participate in shows once a year or less. Only one non-active member, over 66 years of age, stated that they're willing to participate twice a year or more often! One assumes that either circumstance prevented this person from taking part in either of the shows in the past year, or that the shows produced this past year did not appeal.

## **Conclusions**

This survey was the first attempt by the writers, and as such, contained several structural flaws. Nonetheless, patterns emerged which suggest ways forward for the RLOP.

Being part of a show is the biggest drawing card for RLOP members. Even though the experience may be frustrating, participation is highly valued.

In order to improve on members' experience, the RLOP can build a strong culture of respect and mentorship.

The Production team can work on efficient scheduling of rehearsal time, but they also need the cooperation of the cast and crew. Time will not be wasted if attitudes during rehearsals are altered so that people are not "goofing off." Modelling best behaviour by leaders within the RLOP (Board members, Production team) may help. Clarification of behaviour expectations as was done twenty years ago in cast orientation handouts may influence attitudes. Cast can be encouraged to run lines with each other, hone acting skills or practice choreography while waiting for the director to run their scenes. More experienced actors could work with the less experienced, passing on their knowledge and skills. This will not happen spontaneously. Individuals must be approached and asked to work with another member.

A flaw in survey planning didn't allow for direct comparison of audience and member show preferences. However, one can safely assume that Broadway shows with comedic themes are the top choice of both audience and active members. On the other hand, past members prefer Light Opera to Comedy and our audience still retains a great deal of affection for Light Opera, ranking it as the second most popular choice after Broadway classics. So, Gilbert and Sullivan may still be a viable option for presentation.

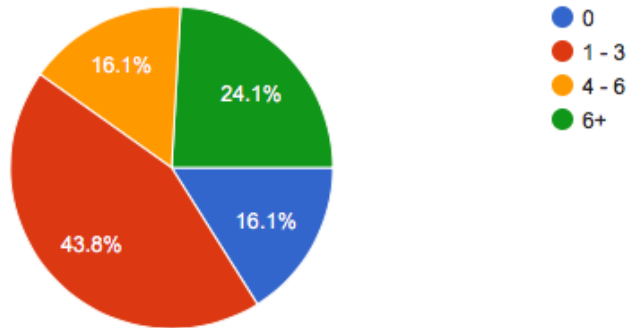
These surveys have not found magic answers to the RLOP's challenges. But they provide some data to help the Board plan for the future. That so many members cared enough to send thoughtful answers shows that they are hopeful for change. And that members of the public wanted to communicate to the RLOP (beyond fervent applause) their deep appreciation for musical theatre hints at the vested interest they have in local theatre.

# RLOP Audience Survey 2018

112 responses

How many RLOP shows in total have you seen (including Mainstage, Dinner/Dessert theatre, youth presentation)?

112 responses



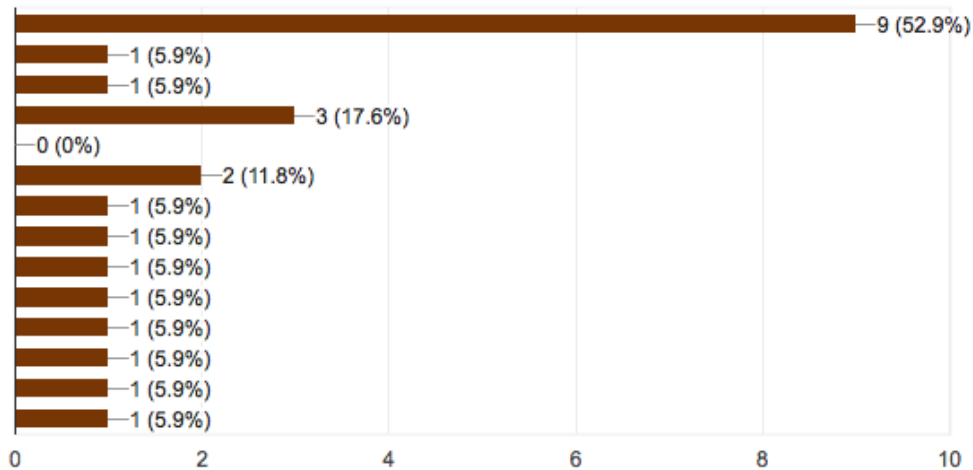


## Never seen an RLOP show

18 responses

What has kept you from attending an RLOP show? Check all the apply.  
Please specify if you choose "Other."

17 responses



I didn't know about the RLOP (9 - 52.9%)

The shows chosen do not interest me (1 - 5.9%)

I prefer other forms of entertainment (1 - 5.9%)

I cannot find information about the shows (3 - 17.6%)

The ticket price is unaffordable (Tickets are \$20 - 25).

Theatre venues are not easy to get to (2 - 11.8%)

It's not a social event my friends and I remember to do. (1 - 5.9%)

Operalite (1 - 5.9%)

Has never caught me at the right moment. Lana asked me attend (Wife for Gino) but I was on business in Vancouver (1 - 5.9%)

Not enough advertising/publicity (1 - 5.9%)

Out of town (1 - 5.9%)

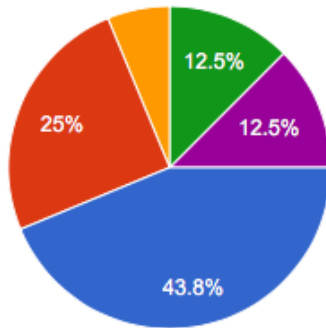
live in Nelway (1 - 5.9%)

Young children (1 - 5.9%)

Time (1 - 5.9%)

## Where do you live?

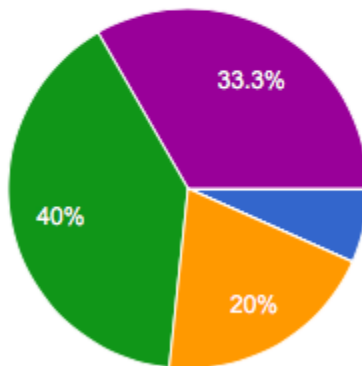
16 responses



- Trail
- Rossland
- Castlegar
- Beaver Valley
- West Kootenay
- Outside West Kootenay

## What is your age?

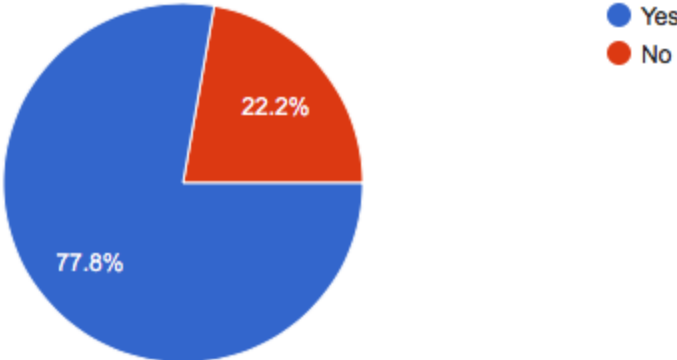
15 responses



- 0 - 15 years old
- 16 - 24
- 25 - 45 years old
- 46 - 64 years old
- 65+ years old
- Prefer to not answer

# Would you like to receive information about future RLOP shows?

18 responses

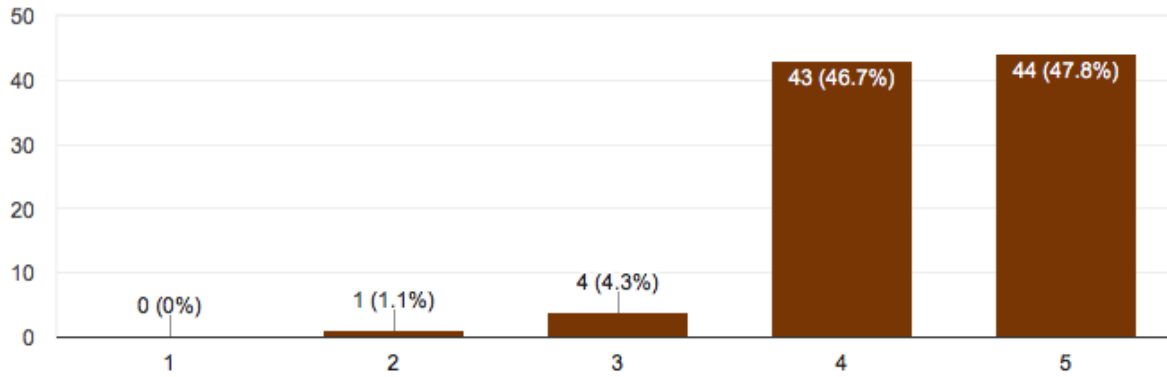


# Have Seen RLOP shows

94 responses

## How did the last show you saw meet your expectations?

92 responses

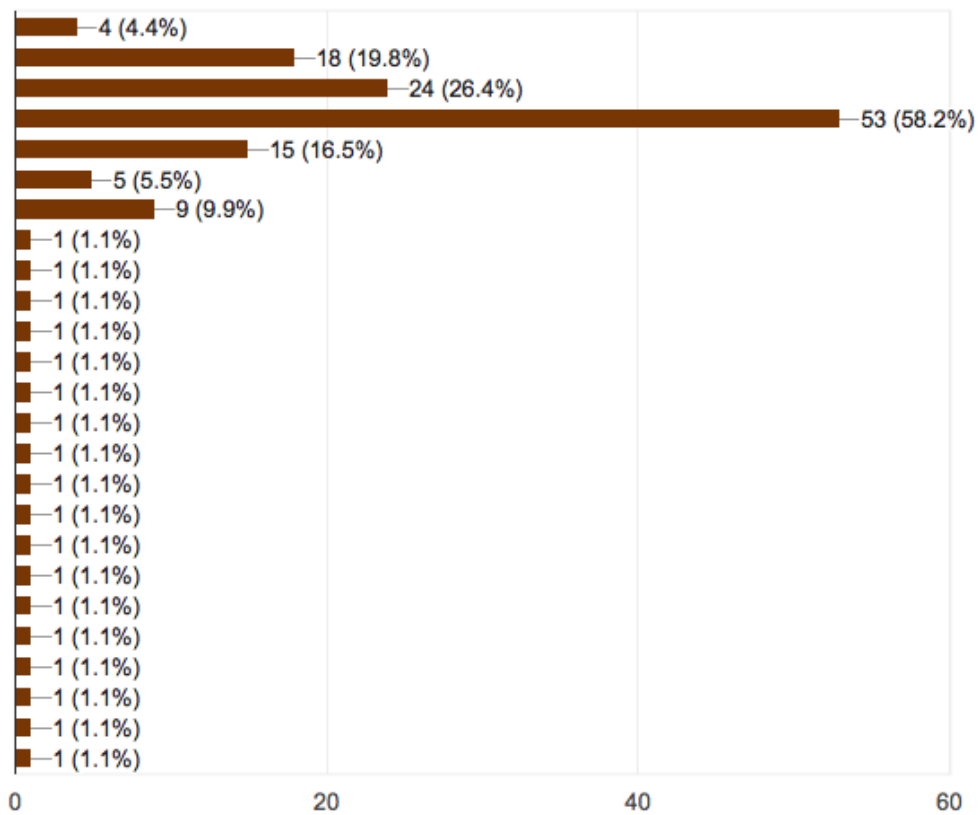


Very disappointing

Greatly exceeded expectation

How did you learn of this show? Check all that apply. Please specify if you choose "Other."

91 responses



RLOP email list (4 - 4.4%)

Newspaper (18 - 19.8%)

Poster (24 - 26.4%)

Word-of-mouth (53 - 58.2%)

Social media (15 - 16.5%)

City message-board (Trail/Rossland) 5 - 5.5%

Radio (9 - 9.9%)

card handed out at Rossland winter carnival parade (1 - 1.1%)

Work (1 - 1.1%)

Friends performing (1 - 1.1%)

Child in show (1 - 1.1%)

stars of the show (1 - 1.1%)

Star (1 - 1.1%)

Trail Arts Council email (1 - 1.1%)

Father was in the show (1 - 1.1%)  
Charles Bailey Theatre (1 - 1.1%)  
Child in play (1 - 1.1%)  
Family (1 - 1.1%)  
Trail Arts Council (1 - 1.1%)  
I'm in Glee (1 - 1.1%)  
Member of cast/production (1 - 1.1%)  
Charles Bailey website (1 - 1.1%)  
Charles Bailey email (1 - 1.1%)  
Glee Club (1 - 1.1%)  
-- Glee Club (1 - 1.1%)

## **What did you enjoy most about the RLOP shows you have seen?**

88 responses

Costumes (2)  
Local talent (2)  
The talent (2)  
local talent (2)  
Story themes  
Seeing all the local talent.  
originality, quality of the ensemble, audience engagement  
Seeing my friends perform  
great music, lots of fun, local stories and the cast enjoyed themselves  
The music and the human  
the players  
The live interaction and performance  
professionalism, colourful  
The enthusiasm and talent of the players  
Loved the costumes and props. Really impressed by the amount of work that goes in.  
creativity/local talent  
seeing the incredible local talent  
hilarity, great music, local performers  
I to see more shows  
The music/singing/stage sets  
songs, sets

local talent, good laugh

Great comedy! Hilarious accents!

historical context and venue

community singers, professional performance, fun

live entertainment, supporting friends who perform

I think the costumes!

seeing locals performs

Love live shows

The humour and spirit

the atmosphere

Music and comedy

Community feel

Variety, comedy

The acting and talent and singing were incredible

They are fun!!

talent and fun

Good local theatre

High level of singing, shows we know

The 'professional' performers, humour, music

Well presented. Musicals have usually been well done.

entertaining, good story-line, great songs

The shows seem well rehearsed

Singing modern songs, humour

Fun, great cast

It seemed authentic, so much fun

always well done

Local theatre, seeing people I know perform

Quality of shows

The fact that it's live

upbeat!!

the performers and level of their performance, staging, enthusiasm

Different, fun, local

They are well produced and acted

very enjoyable

Good stories, good acting, local actors

Enthusiasm of the participants. Good shows!

The comedy

My son being in them

Love the music, appreciate the hard work and enjoy supporting amateur shows.

The singing

Local talent and local content

Watching people have fun

the enthusiastic performances and great song choices. Lots of fun and laughter

Humour, seeing all the people I know. music

The actors are very animated and do a great job of involving the audience

the enthusiasm

music, acting fun

an evening with friends and great entertainment

total production

stories, local people acting

Actors are obviously enjoying their roles. I've always enjoyed the musicals they've chosen. Set work is amazing.

Enthusiastic

Music, vocals, storyline

local talent is amazing; supporting community events; appreciating choice of productions and work it takes to put them on; better connection to people in the area and their showmanship; creative presentation ideas

Costumes, music, stories

I enjoy all musical performances and seeing the local talent

The passion and pure fun our local people put into it!

The singing and the local talent

the whole package -- sets, costumes, the productions (Anne of GG, Reluctant Dragon), live band/orchestra

Love the live orchestra!!

Denis Senecal and Aarons performance

Fun and great productions!

The music

I loved the high quality of the acting and singing. I also felt that the sound quality and volume were particularly well done in this year's show. I love all mainstream musicals, but also enjoyed this year's original story as it was so well written. My husband prefers comedic musicals to serious.

What did you enjoy least about the RLOP shows that you have seen?

57 responses

n/a (4)

Nothing (2)



N/a (2)

Enjoyed all

sound sometimes muffled

Poor singing, acting

Sometimes the singers need more work.

Love live shows

Can't recall anything negative

length of the shows

When I can't hear the words

Dialogue - too long

Legion venue small, not great acoustics

It was well done

Nothing, all amazing!

excitement

prefer drama to musicals

Some are a tad long

..... nothing

old chairs in miners hall

Seating

Distance to travel

Too many set changes

nothing - all good!

Intermission? ;->

There was nothing I did not enjoy

can't always hear everything

When the singing isn't good

All have been great

Too classical

the orchestra tuning and expertise comes and goes

This play is better, but some people are hard to hear

I enjoyed them all.

need better mikes

Would like more dinner theatre

Cost

I didn't care too much for the story in the Reluctant Dragon - perhaps it was too juvenile

Long delays

acoustics

No complaints

It is always good, sometimes sound is not the best

having to get out of my pjs to go out :->

sound system

Can't think of anything I haven't enjoyed

sound

Snow

The sound sometimes is not the best

Nicer props maybe?

Sometimes it's hard to hear the actors

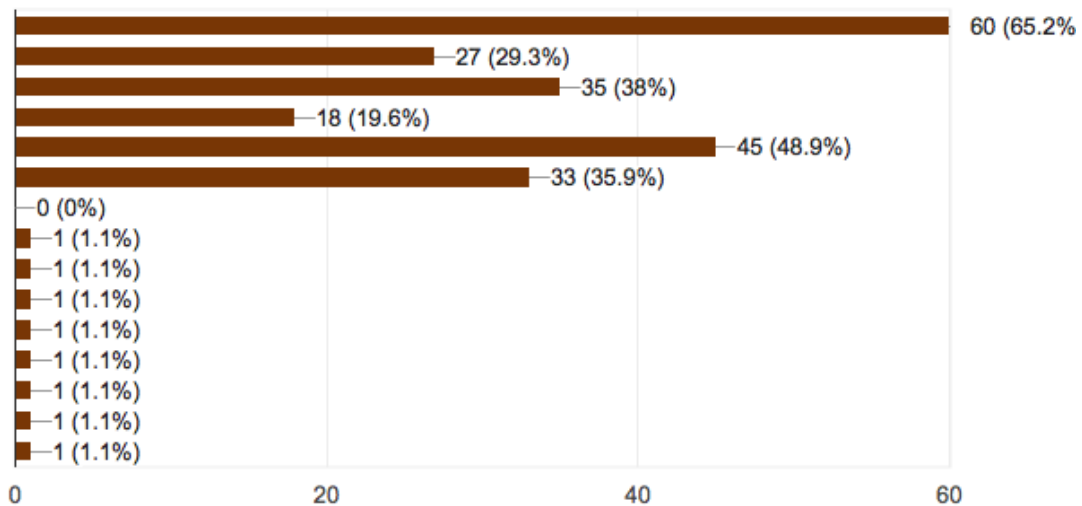
Hard to say. I've enjoyed both of the productions I've been to so very much.

nothing, it was wonderful

I'm sometimes disappointed if the sound is distorted or unbalanced for a particular singer, but I did not experience that in this year's show. Good job!

### What type of musical do you like to see? Check all that apply. Please describe if you choose "Other."

92 responses



Broadway classics (60 - 65.2%)

Contemporary musicals - shows produced within the last 5 - 15 years (27 - 29.3%)

Rock musicals (35 - 38%)

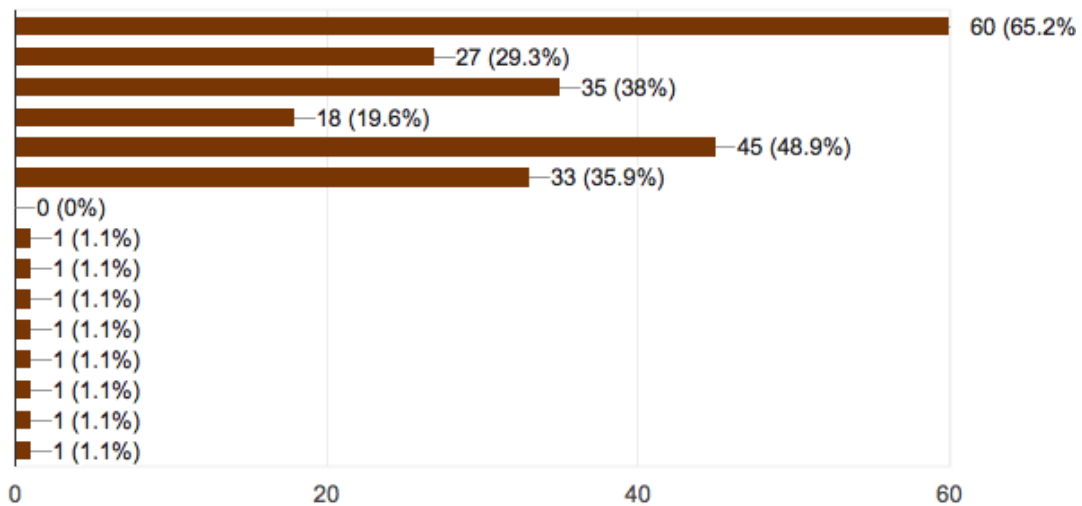
Musicals for children (18 - 19.6%)

Light opera (Gilbert & Sullivan) (45 - 48.9%)

- Christmas shows (33 - 35.9%)
- Dinner/dessert theatre (0 - 0.0%)
- Locally inspired humour! (1 - 1.1%)
- HAIR! the musical (1 - 1.1%)
- Reluctant Dragon (1 - 1.1%)
- Loved "Gino" show!!! (1 - 1.1%)
- Sound of Music (1 - 1.1%)
- Sound of Music? luv luv Wizard of Oz luv luv (1 - 1.1%)
- the show "Once" (1 - 1.1%)

**What type of musical do you like to see? Check all that apply. Please describe if you choose "Other."**

92 responses



- I didn't know about the RLOP (10 - 13.9%)
- The shows chosen do not interest me (13 - 18.1%)
- I prefer other forms of entertainment (7 - 9.7%)
- I cannot find information about the shows (4 - 5.6%)
- The ticket price is unaffordable (Tickets are \$20 - 25). (5 - 6.9%)
- Theatre venues are not easy to get to (5 - 6.9%)
- Three little kids - just getting to an age to enjoy sitting in the theatre (1 - 1.4%)
- working (1 - 1.4%)
- Parking (1 - 1.4%)
- Conflict with other events (1 - 1.4%)

too busy (1 - 1.4%)  
time (1 - 1.4%)  
Shows are sometimes too long (1 - 1.4%)  
it seems a bit of a cool guy club that is hard to get into (1 - 1.4%)  
Busy?? schedule (1 - 1.4%)  
Not enough time (1 - 1.4%)  
time of shows with young kids - have performances for children please (1 - 1.4%)  
I missed "Gino" (1 - 1.4%)  
Busy (1 - 1.4%)  
Engagements (1 - 1.4%)  
Having children (1 - 1.4%)  
Nothing (1 - 1.4%)  
Have children (1 - 1.4%)  
Time restraints (1 - 1.4%)  
Kids :> (1 - 1.4%)  
Work schedule (1 - 1.4%)  
Lack of time or I forget (1 - 1.4%)  
Timing, kid appropriate (1 - 1.4%)  
I've gone to everyone that I could (1 - 1.4%)  
Some too long but not "Finding A Wife for Gino" (1 - 1.4%)  
Not in area full time (1 - 1.4%)  
didn't sync with my schedule (1 - 1.4%)  
Not on performance list of cities (Nelson) (1 - 1.4%)  
work (1 - 1.4%)  
Times - in the past (1 - 1.4%)  
don't always get a chance to view shows as they fall on night of other commitments (1 - 1.4%)  
Parking can be a problem - because of snow? (1 - 1.4%)  
No reason has kept me from attending (1 - 1.4%)  
Just miss when they are on or other commitments (1 - 1.4%)  
nothing (1 - 1.4%)  
I enjoy the full musicals, smaller shows such as Steel Magnolias, not so much (1 - 1.4%)  
difficult to come in the evening, have young kids (1 - 1.4%)  
I'm only here during the winter ski season (1 - 1.4%)

## **Is there anything else you would like to tell us?**

6 responses

Please shorten the shows. They are always too long.

(don't want to receive info - advertising is good)

I come to all the shows. I usually am aware of the advertising and am on the Baily email list so get information about what is going on.

already get info on Facebook

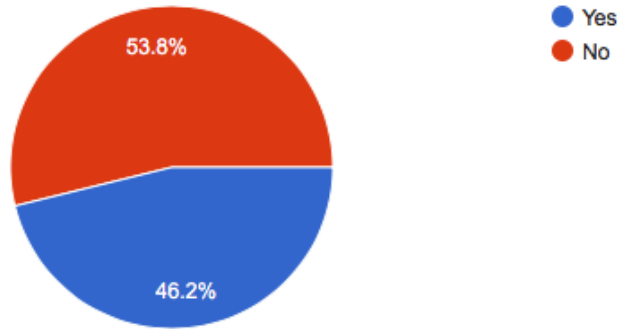
The kids will tell me (about the shows)

love that tonight's show was presented in Trail at the Bailey

# RLOP Members Survey 2018

Were you involved in an RLOP production this past year (i.e. The Reluctant Dragon or Finding A Wife For Gino)?

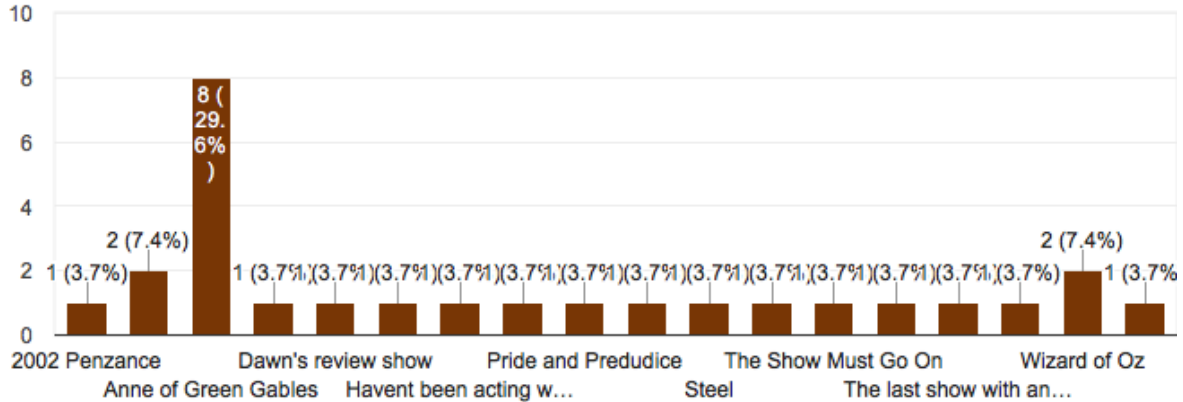
52 responses



## Past Members (answered "No" to above question)

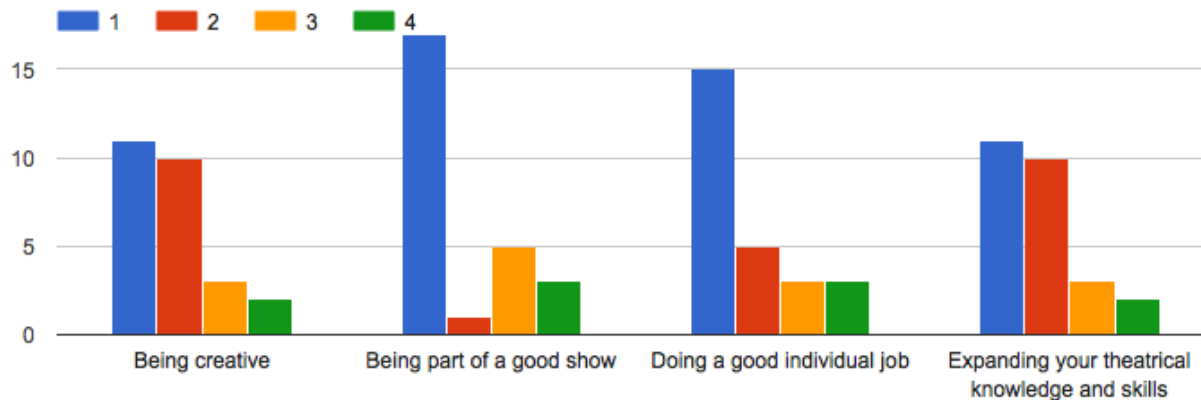
Which RLOP show were you last involved in?

27 responses



- Penzance (2002) (1 - 3.7%)
- Oklahoma (2004) (1 - 3.7%)
- HMS Pinafore (2006) (1 - 3.7%)
- It Happened One Night at The Opera (2010) (1 - 3.7%)
- Wizard of Oz (2011) (3 - 11.1%)
- Pride and Prejudice (2012) (2 - 7.4%)
- The Show Must Go On 2013 (3 - 11.1%)
- Anne of Green Gables (11 - 40.7%)
- The one after Anne of Green Gables (1 - 3.7%)
- Steel Magnolias (2015) (2 - 7.4%)

Please rank the following experiences with respect to how much you enjoyed them, with '1' being most enjoyable to '4' being least enjoyable.



## What was your least favourite experience participating in any RLOP show and why? 24 responses

Makeup new and itchy

The timing of the performances - right after Christmas - during flu season - everyone is run down and there is always lots of sickness among the cast and crew.

People not learning their parts

"It Happened One Night at The Opera"--all around just not a very well written show.

Being stuffed in the bear pit in Nelson

Long drive from Castlegar

Time wasted.... i.e. having no rehearsal schedule and showing up when not needed

Waiting around for my parts to rehearse.

Difficulty getting people to come to rehearsals. I directed this show with Lisa Henderson. It so so hard to put on a quality show when people don't show up to rehearse

Lack of focus/attendance during rehearsals leading to under preparedness at week of show; this makes the show less strong, and therefore less fun!

I tried directing and it was definitely not for me!

Trying to find orchestra musicians to fill parts. The score calls for certain instruments and if you can't find players, you fail the score. Having to move tympani, drums, stands, keyboard and accessories. Dealing with personnel in chorus and orchestra over a period of three to four months who are not committed.

Too much goofing off.

Frustration with people not showing up to practices repeatedly.

I don't think I ever had a bad experience with RLOP.

Packing up and tearing down ;)

Bickering amongst cast

Driving from Fruitvale to Rossland in the winter! LOL!

Looking for volunteers

Don't really like being in front, liked being helpful behind the scenes

Can't recall anything specific

the people, the fun and the wonderful music

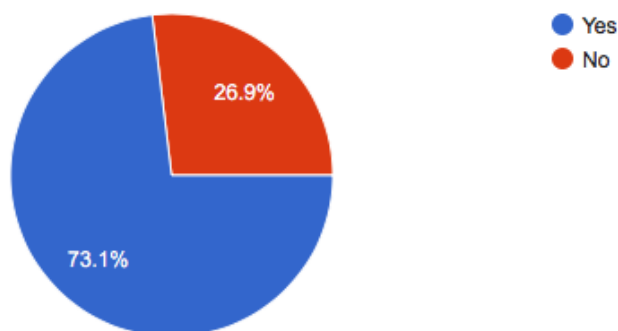
I don't think I had a least favorite.

Two items: people wasting rehearsal time by goofing around & lack of lead time for show preparation.

Full question (below), "Do you usually find out about upcoming RLOP shows in time to audition or volunteer and to make the necessary arrangements or time commitment if you are interested?"

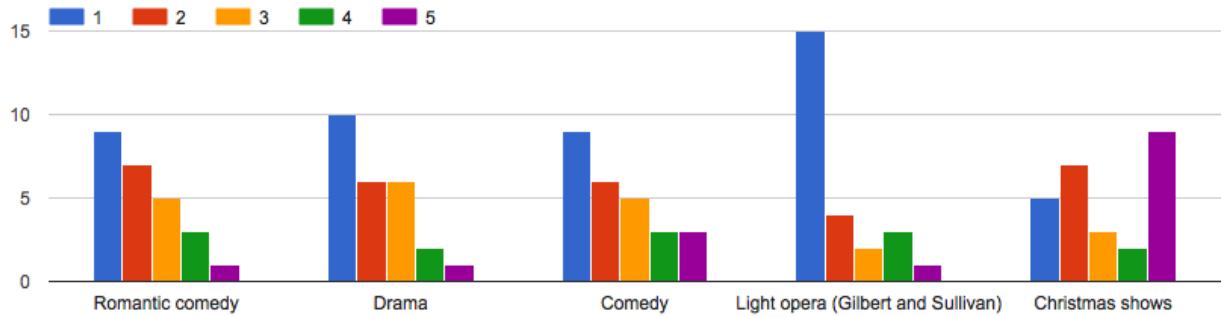
**Do you usually find out about upcoming RLOP shows in time to audition or volunteer and to make the necessary a...me commitment if you are interested?**

26 responses

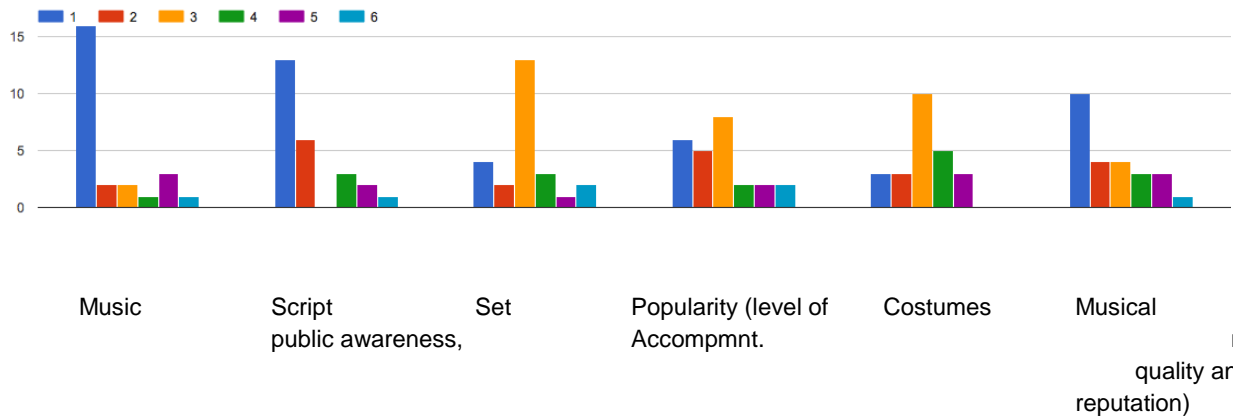




Please rank your preferences for show types you might be interested in taking part of. '1' indicates most preferred, '5' indicates least preferred.

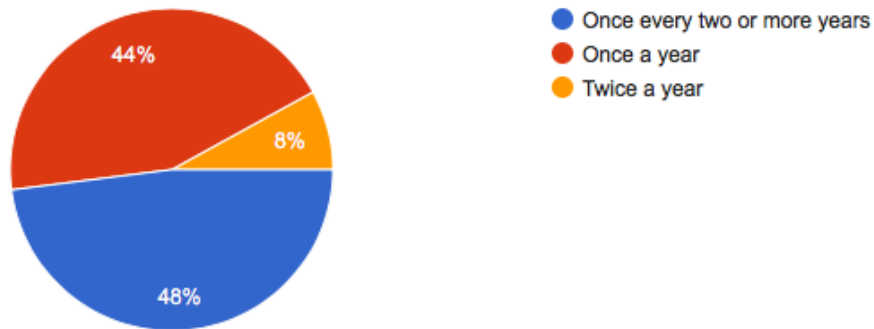


Please rank the importance to you of the following elements in a show. '1' indicates most important, '5' indicates least important.



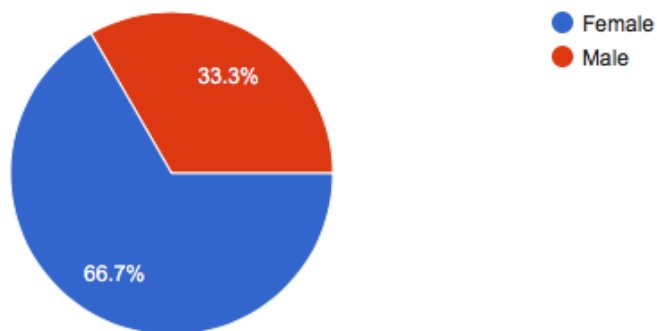
## Barring unforeseen circumstances, how often would you be interested in participating in shows that you liked?

25 responses



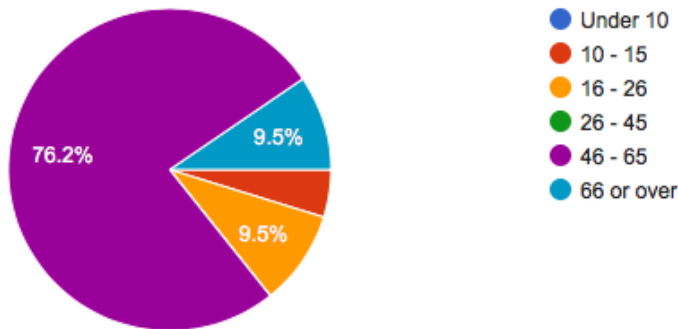
## If you enjoy performing onstage, what is your gender? This helps in choosing shows with cast requirements we can meet.

21 responses



**If you enjoy performing onstage, what is your age range? This information helps in choosing shows with cast requirements we can meet.**

21 responses



**What is the most important thing the RLOP can do to make your next show experience better?** 27 responses

No comments

I would like to work on a spring show rather than a winter. The fall is so busy.

Stop living in the past

Select celebrated Broadway and G&S musicals, i.e. "Camelot", not "Spamalot".

Have an orchestra

Schedule rehearsals on parts versus all attending general rehearsals

have a live orchestra

Shorten the shows. They are always too long.

I'm not sure. I have noticed my enthusiasm for doing drama has waned. I suppose it is an age thing. Also, my patience for people not fully committing to the project has fallen. I hate wasting other people's time as well as having my time wasted.

Plan ahead! Which it looks like you're doing for 2019, so bravo!

Have a big chorus of people who can sing, men and women.

Choose shows with roles for young women.

I probably won't be in another show because I have too many other interests. I am not willing to set myself up for frustration and disappointment over a three-four-month period trying to achieve what the score asks and do all the physical stuff that goes with it.

Do a show that requires a full pit orchestra

I can't think of anything.

Just want to say that I think the current executive seems to be doing everything they can to keep RLOP going and I'm grateful for that. It seems the struggles are perennially the same, from finding an accompanist/music director with time on their hands, to finding enough men, and in having enough young members of talent that remain in the area, to keep the mill turning. Maybe a good newspaper/radio interview session talking about the organization and its brilliant history, and calling out for members, done by a charismatic and articulate person with sincere love and little ego? (Tanya would be my recommendation)

I Love the happy/fun/dramatic Musicals that appeal to the family crowd as well- Newer and a bit more modern might be good. Loved Gino!! Had everything!

Flexible rehearsal times that suit all

Have a live orchestra

More musicals or operas

Welcome new comers

Have the actors and musicians prepared to the best of their ability.

I am not sure there is one particular thing. I think all things are important. The quality of the script, of the actors, and of the music. If you can get an orchestra.....do another G&S!

My participation has been in the orchestra so my preference is for the musical productions. I recognize that it is a difficult task for someone to take on the musical director position. I don't know what to suggest for recruiting someone.

For me, it is timing as I am out of town in Feb and March

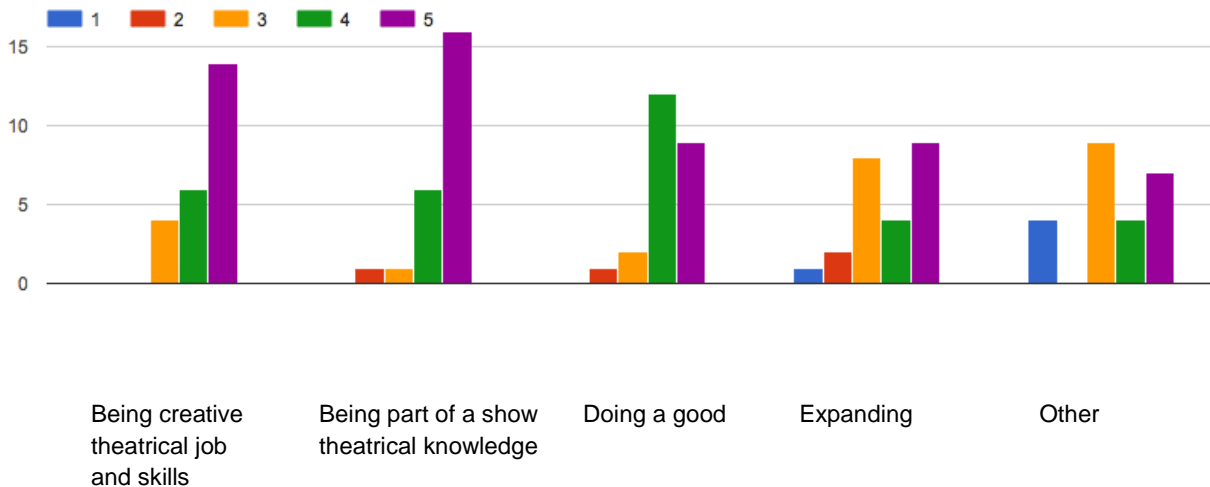
I really love the large-cast musicals, with their camaraderie and all the energy they bring. I am not currently living in the area, but RLOP was a huge influence in my development as a playwright and theatre enthusiast.

Plan the show - all aspects of it - WELL in advance.

## Current Members (Answered “Yes” to first question)

NB Order of ranking is the opposite of Past Members answers, i.e. Past Members ranked ‘1’ as most enjoyable, ‘5’ as least enjoyable.

Please rank your experiences in the show according to how much you enjoyed them.  
Check '1' for least enjoyable, check '5' for most enjoyable.



## What was your least favourite experience as part of this show?

21

responses

I would have loved to have had a larger role so that I could work on building my character; this would have expanded my theatrical knowledge and skills.

The lack of support from the executive and the nitpicking and stress some executive members added to the production

Not being able to do more/be on stage. (Due to other commitments)

Being at rehearsals I wasn't needed for.

Stress over breaking even/finding enough sponsorship to make the show happen

meeting all the likeminded people that truly enjoy what they are doing!

Having responsibility for duties I didn't know how to fulfil, therefore had to find information on my own, without guidance - the upside was finding I was able to meet that challenge, though perhaps not as well as I would have liked

Poor time management

Explaining what I do

Personality conflicts between Production team and Executive members

No objections to anything.

working with outdated equipment

none

just the time commitment

Rehearsals didn't start on time.

Eric, the guy who played Arthur. Other than that, it was a very enjoyable experience.

Felt out of my comfort zone most of the time.

Negative people, especially people being rude - it's important to keep in mind that we're all volunteers and to treat everyone with kindness and respect.

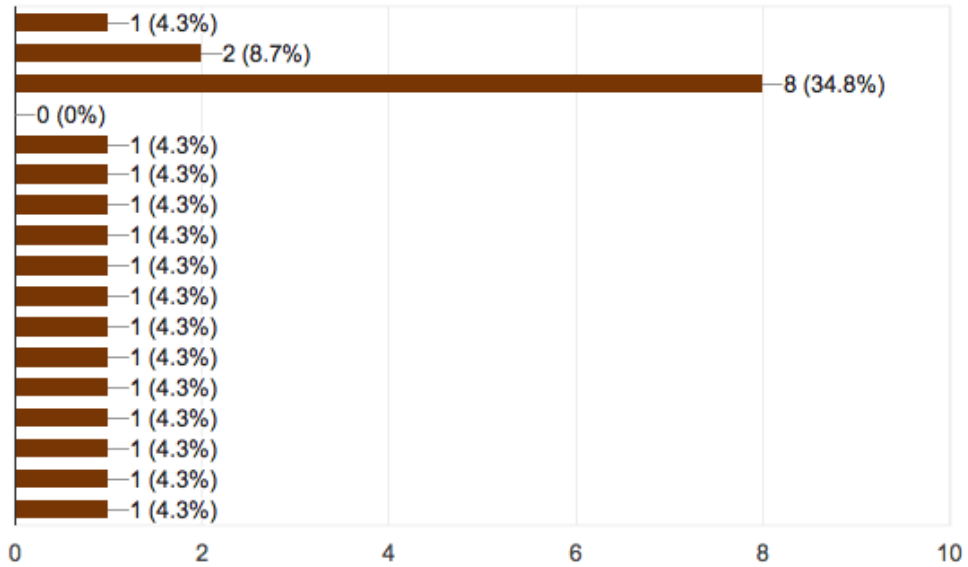
Didn't really have one

Unwillingness of certain members to contribute positively and spending most of their time complaining, being difficult, or not using the limited time we had for rehearsals on unimportant matters.

Live music

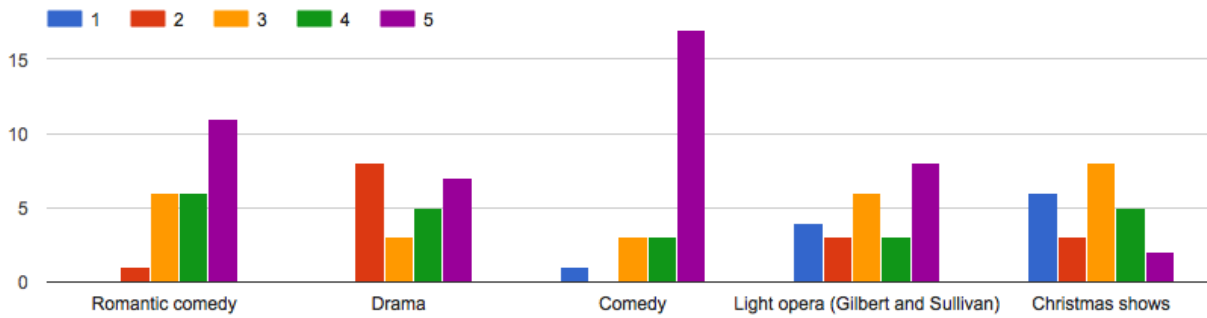
# How did you find out about this show?

23 responses

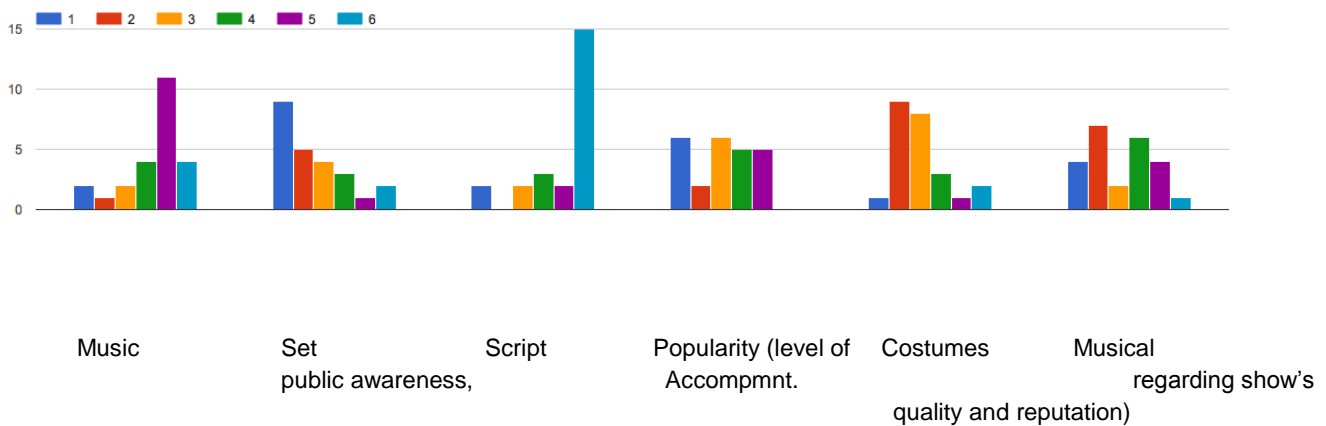


- RLOP Facebook (1 - 4.3%)
- RLOP website (2 - 8.6%)
- Friend/family (8 - 34.8%)
- Newspaper 0
- Poster (1 - 4.3%)
- RLOP email (1 - 4.3%)
- I wrote it (1 - 4.3%)
- Walked past the Bodega one day (1 - 4.3%)
- told by the director (1 - 4.3%)
- RLOP Board (1 - 4.3%)
- It's part of being involved (1 - 4.3%)
- Already in the RLOP (1 - 4.3%)
- asked to participate (1 - 4.3%)
- Executive (1 - 4.3%)
- Called to see if I could help (1 - 4.3%)
- RLOP email list (1 - 4.3%)
- My mum wrote it and had me play myself (smiley) (1 - 4.3%)

Please rank your preferences for types of shows you might be interested in.

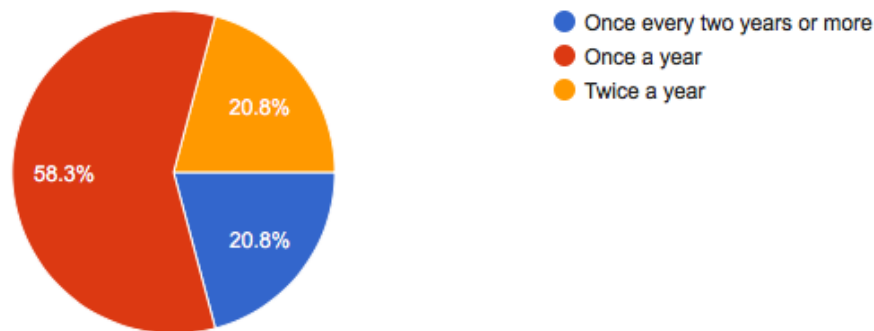


Please rank the importance to you of the following elements of a show.



Barring unforeseen circumstances, how often would you be interested in participating in shows that you like?

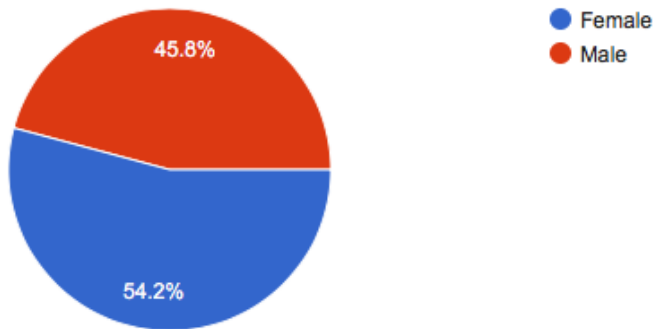
24 responses





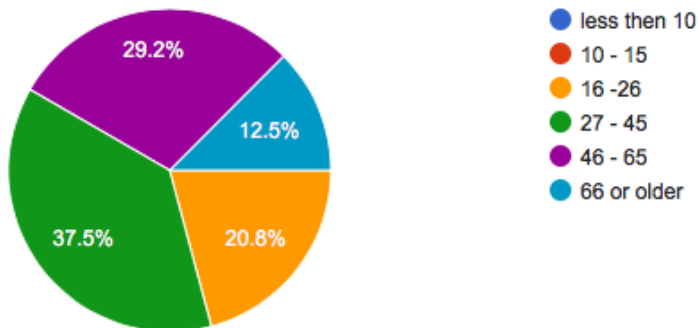
## What is your gender? (This information helps in choosing shows with cast requirements we can meet.)

24 responses



## What is your age range? (This information helps in choosing shows with cast requirements we can meet.)

24 responses



## What is the most important thing the RLOP can do to make your next show experience better? 21 responses

This is a tough one to answer right now as my show experience this year was fantastic!

Finding a great script makes it more enjoyable for those watching the play. As well as motivating and fun for the cast and crew.

Choose well known shows. Even at this point a G&S would be better known. Spend the money to make the money. Try to attract more audiences by doing productions like Anne of Green Gables, The Sound of Music,

Wizard of Oz, Brigadoon, Oklahoma etc. Some of the most successful shows we had were former Broadway productions. Do those and the audience comes. Stop skipping a year - We did Gino again but if we hadn't there wouldn't have been a show this spring. Build on momentum. Don't follow a huge show with nothing and then a small show no one has ever heard of. With Gino, you stepped into more racier shows. I'm not saying do Hair but Gino proved we can bring in audiences even if it isn't a family show. When a production team comes forward with a show, don't let money stop you from doing it - apply for grants if we have to. And if there is anything I have learned - ask people to come into a show. If they don't audition, phone them up and ask them to reconsider. it's hard work but should also be a lot of fun.

Quality of the show. I know G&S is free, but it doesn't resonate much with a modern audience, so I'm not as interested in being involved.

Better rehearsal scheduling. Wouldn't mind doing plays also as opposed to only musicals. You can stage a lot of excellent plays with no budget and a small cast to get money for the next big show while keeping the community engaged I.g

Have a good reserve of funding secured before production starts to take pressure off show producer so she/he can focus on building the creative team.

everything was great, I only wish I could do more! but with work and family I only have so much time!

foster a culture of open communications among team members, transparency, teamwork, cooperation, mutual support

Time management. Please don't have me there for hours at a time when you are working other cast. I would like to be challenged by my director to grow and learn and so I would like to see professional directors so they can be held to a higher standard.

?

Organized rehearsals that make the most of everyone's time.

Have rehearsals organized so as to minimize actors' time spent waiting while acts and scenes they are not in are rehearsed. Certainly, avoiding the incidence of actors coming to rehearsals where they are not in any scenes rehearsed that evening.

enunciate

none

director can tell me how to make my performance better. need to be more bossy.

Keep it up

More support and communication.

I know it's a struggle, but more organization from the director/production team so that rehearsals start on time and are on a planned schedule (i.e., scene 2 and 3 Thursday, scene 1 and 4 Tuesday), and everyone has something to work on, rather than just sitting and watching the principles.

Don't know

Cast, or assign roles, based on attitude and effort. If someone's doing a bad job do something about it or tell them!

Keep with live accompaniment

## **Organizational Development**

**Name of Organization:** Rossland Light Opera Players

**Date of Session:** Friday, April 6, 2018

**Participants:** Sarah Sordi, Board Chair; Tom Buckley, Director; Denis Senecal, Director

**Advisor:** Andrew Jarrett

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### **1. What is your organization trying to achieve in its operations?**

- Musical theatre for audiences
- Creative outlet for members → indulge a love of theatre
- Encourage younger people to be involved with theatre

### **2. What activities do you undertake to achieve these ends?**

- Produce shows twice a year, usually musical theatre, but may be other form
- Major production in the spring (takes 5 months of activity/rehearsal)
- Minor production in the autumn (takes 3 months of activity/rehearsal)
- Sidelines: rental of costumes, sets and props, musical instruments, and sound equipment
- Members able to use space
- Participate in community events (e.g. parade, carolling)
- Member nights (e.g. karaoke party)

### **3. How do you determine whether or not you are successful?**

- Enough money to fund next year's show
- Track membership (generally people who participate)
- Tickets sold
- Engagement though participation in member nights, attendance at auditions
- Have done some surveying of members and audiences; data not yet analysed

### **4. Why are you requesting assistance?**

- Aware that times have changed (20 yr. ago had massive group of core members)

- Need some structure
- A vision to communicate and entice members

**5. What change(s) would you like to see in your organization as a result of assistance?**

- More people engaged
- Reduction in volunteer burnout
- More people to share the load
- Structure/system to support organization (e.g. committees)
- Board to be strategic
- More people using the building
- More projects using the building
- A five-year plan that includes financial goals, grants to apply for, committees with mandates, a building maintenance plan
- Plan to present to members, potential members, and funders

**6. What are the main strengths of your organization?**

- History and reputation
- Own the building (no mortgage)
- Core of committed people
- A number of talented, creative people
- Rapport with community
- Collaboration with other cultural organizations

**7. What are the main weaknesses of your organization?**

- Not enough money
- Some unintended infighting (divergent opinions)
- Building is old, high maintenance
- Lack of key infrastructure (e.g. no internet)
- Short on talent (e.g. musical directors)

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS	Ranking 1= weak 5=strong	NOTES
<b>1. Planning &amp; Direction</b>		
a) Vision/Mission /Values	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not formalized or shared</li> <li>• Have tradition (“What would Babs do?”)</li> </ul>
b) Strategic Planning	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
c) Program Development	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not well developed</li> <li>• Responsive; based on ideas from members</li> <li>• Have a calendar of events</li> </ul>
d) Program Evaluation	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not really</li> <li>• Get feedback; occasional survey, sometimes debrief, but not documented for future use</li> </ul>
e) Research (needs assessment, sector stats)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary:</b> The organization is guided by a general sense of mission and tradition, but has nothing documented that can be a focus for members or shared with stakeholders. It needs a plan and some ideas for systematic monitoring and review of that plan to identify what’s working and what is not and to ensure sustainability.</p>		
<b>2. Material Resources</b>		
a) Property	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Own the building, no mortgage</li> <li>• Building contains space for rehearsal, storage of their equipment (costumes, props, sound equipment, instruments, etc.)</li> <li>• Get a tax break from the City</li> </ul>
b) Equipment (incl. vehicles)	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound equipment and lighting</li> <li>• Props, costumes, instruments</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary:</b> The building is historically significant, but old and requiring regular maintenance. The group would like to see it better utilized.</p>		
<b>3. Human Resources</b>		
a) Leadership	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board provides overall leadership</li> <li>• Some consistent key people: Tom re the building, Patricia re costumes</li> <li>• Volunteer show producers take on lead when a production is in development, rehearsal and performance</li> </ul>
b) Staffing	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No paid staff</li> <li>• Sometimes hire tech people</li> </ul>
c) Members/Volunteers	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About 130 members</li> <li>• 40-50 active as volunteers</li> </ul>

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS	Ranking 1= weak 5=strong	NOTES
d) Teamwork	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No structure to support teamwork, other than the Board</li> <li>All have good intentions</li> <li>Some frictions, but people pull together to get things done</li> </ul>
e) Role Clarity	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not formalized for the organization, but people generally know what to do, take on the required tasks</li> <li>Needs some work in terms of role definitions (e.g. clear responsibilities &amp; limits for committees)</li> <li>Draft production manual has roles &amp; responsibilities for a performance production</li> </ul>
f) Performance Management	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not formal</li> <li>Board based on whether or not you are re-elected</li> </ul>
g) Succession Planning & Recruitment	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nothing formal</li> </ul>
h) Orientation, training, & staff development	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nothing formal</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary:</b> The Society is run by the Board and supported by the goodwill of volunteers and kept together by a shared passion for musical theatre. The group appears ready to imbue the organization with some more structure and make its operations more systematic.</p>		
<p><b>4. Financial Management</b></p>		
a) Funds/Sources	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seat sales for performances are primary source</li> <li>Also some sponsorships for shows (e.g. Credit Union, Teck)</li> <li>Rentals (costumes, props, sound/light equipment)</li> <li>Some private donations</li> <li>Occasional grants (equipment, not operations)</li> <li>Considering a membership fee</li> </ul>
b) Expertise/Bookkeeping	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer treasurer does the books</li> <li>Has experience</li> </ul>
c) Budgeting	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No annual budget</li> <li>Each show gets a budget</li> </ul>
d) Reporting/Monitoring	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly revenue and expenses to Board</li> </ul>
e) Audit/Oversight	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No audit or objective review</li> </ul>
f) Fund Raising / Development	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costume sales</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary:</b> Financial management has been adequate for the work of the Society to date. Seat sales, augmented by sponsorships and rentals maintain the operation. Financial controls appear minimal.</p>		
<p><b>5. Legal/Risk Management</b></p>		
a) Incorporation/By-laws	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have not yet completed the transition to new Societies Act by-laws, but in process</li> </ul>

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS	Ranking 1= weak 5=strong	NOTES
b) Filing/Status	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up to date</li> <li>Have charitable status</li> </ul>
c) Risk Management & Governance Policies	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No much policy</li> <li>Rental agreements are legally vetted</li> </ul>
d) Insurance	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Property, fire, liability insurance</li> <li>Directors and Officers liability</li> <li>Includes performances</li> </ul>
e) Health & Safety	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign-in book</li> <li>Regular inspections by fire dept.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary:</b> Insurance appears to be adequate. Improvements in policy and procedure would strengthen the Society's capacity to monitor and manage risk, especially with regard to health and safety practices.</p>		
<p><b>6. Administration /Management</b></p>		
a) Structure	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board is operational</li> <li>Policy to not pay members</li> </ul>
b) Accountability	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not documented or formalized</li> <li>Well understood within the production crew</li> </ul>
c) Operations Policies	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft production manual</li> <li>Draft operations manual</li> </ul>
d) Reporting & Record Keeping	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes and agendas, posted on website</li> <li>Filing cabinets downstairs with historical records</li> </ul>
e) Knowledge Management	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Production manual</li> <li>President's binder (passed on from each previous) contains some historical information</li> </ul>
f) Contract Management	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As needed (e.g. for venues)</li> </ul>
g) External service providers	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As needed</li> </ul>
h) Information Systems	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Filing cabinets</li> <li>Website</li> <li>I-cloud storage in development</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary:</b> The management structure is simple and informal, with the Board managing the operations and key volunteers carrying some specific operational responsibilities. Procedural policy sounds adequate. Lines of accountability should be clarified and supported by policy. Information storage and accessibility needs improvement.</p>		
<p><b>7. Governance</b></p>		
a) Board Engagement	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most of the 9 directors are very engaged</li> <li>All help out in one way or another</li> </ul>
b) Board (role) Knowledge	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not well-versed in governance</li> </ul>

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS	Ranking 1= weak 5=strong	NOTES
c) Board Composition /Skill set	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directors have a variety of skills and connections around the community</li> <li>• Would like some more business and marketing savvy</li> </ul>
d) Process (meetings, etc.)	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings generally run well, but could be tighter</li> </ul>
e) Oversight (monitoring)	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board keeps an eye on everything</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary:</b> Board is passionate and focussed on delivering shows. It needs to and is ready to pay more attention to its governance responsibilities by developing a strategic plan and making improvements to the structure and systems of the organization to ensure its sustainability.</p>		
<p><b>8. Community Relationships</b></p>		
a) Visibility	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good regional profile</li> <li>• Participates in community events (e.g. spring concert, carol singing)</li> </ul>
b) Reputation	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good reputation</li> </ul>
c) Memberships	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arts BC</li> <li>• Trail and Rossland Arts Council</li> </ul>
d) Partnerships, Collaboration	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good ties with many local organizations (e.g. Glee Club, Follies, City of Rossland, Joe Hill Coffeehouse)</li> <li>• Shows are presented in local schools</li> <li>• Part of Basin Culture Tour</li> </ul>
e) Donor/Funder Relations	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank-yous for donations</li> <li>• Good relationships with sponsors (e.g. Teck)</li> <li>• Grants from CBT, City, Heritage BC</li> </ul>
f) Communications (website, brochures, social media)	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up-to-date website &amp; Facebook pages (open &amp; closed)</li> <li>• Posters, ads, flyers, radio promos, email and snail-mail list</li> <li>• Participate in parade</li> </ul>
g) Responsiveness	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact through website, get a confirmation of receipt, then a reply</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary:</b> The Society has a good reputation and visibility in the community and multiple channels of communication/promotion. It maintains good relations with community and stakeholders, including sponsors and donors.</p>		

### Organizational Assessment Report

Based on the completed assessment, the following summary, prioritized recommendations and supporting resources are meant to assist the development and sustainability of your non-profit organization. Your organization is encouraged to consider which suggested actions best suit your needs and priorities. Your advisor can discuss opportunities for the Non-profit Advisors Program to arrange for and possibly assist with costs for any consulting services recommended below.

### General Summary



The Rossland Light Opera Players is an established and well-regarded piece of the Rossland and area community. It continues to have a core of dedicated volunteers, both for the Board and for its activities, which focus on musical theatre. It is well connected to its community and receives support and sponsorship from local businesses as well as its patrons. It owns a historically-significant building in central Rossland where it stores all its equipment and its members can rehearse. Despite these strengths, sales and member activities are not growing and revenues are just sufficient to keep operating at the current level, assuming that volunteer involvement continues as it has.

The Society is looking for a support in developing a vision and plan for the future that provides a focus and structure for current members and that attracts more volunteers, talent, and resources to the productions it wishes to offer. Currently, it operates with just enough funds to present each subsequent show. The organization relies on a core of active volunteers without much in the way of organizational structure or system to support the work.

In order to move forward and attract new people and talent, the Society must develop and clearly communicate a renewed vision and goals and be clear about how directors and staff can contribute to that vision and help implement activities that will achieve the goals. With an agreed-upon strategic plan in place, roles and responsibilities can be clarified in its context, and systems developed as needed to support the developing organization.

## **Recommended Priorities**

Based on this review, the priority appears to be for the development of a strategic plan.

**MAIN PRIORITY: Develop a strategic plan to attract both people and resources and increase the usage of its building.**

The Society should engage in a strategic planning process that:

- Brings together the key people in the organization (directors, key volunteers);
- Elicits prior input from each board member and key stakeholders (current members/volunteers, sponsors, partners, and other selected community members, including potential board members);
- Develops a common vision for the future of the organization;
- Develops agreed-upon goals and objectives; including financial goals, grants to apply for, committees with mandates, a building maintenance plan; and
- Leads to operational planning and role clarification that supports and coordinates the activities of the Society.

**Appendix: Additional Recommendations & Resources** (selected from the CBT website list of resources. For a more complete list see <https://ourtrust.org/our-work/community/non-profit-advisors-program/>)

### **1. Material Resources**

Given the importance of the building, the Society should focus some energy on developing a short and long-term plan for the maintenance and potential upgrades. This should be done in the context of the newly developed strategic plan. Indeed, it is expected that use of and attention to the building will be a key point in the strategic plan.

### **2. Human Resources**

Since volunteers are key to the success of the organization, the Board might benefit from consulting the following resource.

<https://www.stepupbc.ca/develop-your-nonprofit/support-volunteers#.Ws0iuC Mwf6>

In order to help establish and define key roles and responsibilities, the Board might find some assistance in consulting the following website:

<http://www.governinggood.ca/resources/sample-policies-dalhousie-collection/>

Given the reliance on a few key board members, the Board should build some Succession Planning into their longer-term plan. The following guide may assist.

<https://www.stepupbc.ca/sites/default/files/downloadable-material/Succession-management.pdf>

### **3. Financial Management**

A volunteer Treasurer does the bookkeeping, which is not unusual in small organizations. There is little in the way of financial controls and checks and balances and, for the protection of the organization and the volunteer, it would be useful to build in some additional financial control measures. The following link has some useful suggestions.

<http://www.firstnonprofit.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Best-Practices-for-Nonprofit-Internal-Controls.pdf>

### **4. Administration/Management**

At the operational level, thought should be given to a gradual improvement and documentation of policy and procedure. An outline for an operations manual may help provide structure to this development and identify priorities and gaps.

<https://aspirationtech.org/blog/nonprofitoperations/opsmanual>

### **5. Program Evaluation and Market Research**

Given that the Centre is essentially a social enterprise, it would do well to become more systematic in analysing the data it collects about its activities. It appears to have been collecting useful information with regard to attendance at shows, the occasional survey and from debriefs, but has not made much use of this information to date.

There is a webinar on program evaluation, which might prompt some thinking in this regard.

<https://ourtrust.org/our-work/community/non-profit-advisors-program/webinar-registration/>

The Centre may also wish to connect with the Basin Business Advisor Program to get some support in business planning and market research for their social enterprise. One connects to this through your local Community Futures, but it is another program supported by the Columbia Basin Trust.

### **6. Board Recruitment and Development**

The strategic planning process may be an opportunity to invite some potential members to join in making a contribution to the renewed vision. For others, they may be more likely to engage if they see a clear vision and well-developed strategic plan to provide context for their contribution.

In the meantime, current board members may wish to avail themselves of some of the following resources.

a) For increasing their governance skills:

The webinar series posted on the CBT website offers a range of short and engaging webinars that can be viewed by individuals and/or makes a good reference for board development discussions.

<https://ourtrust.org/our-work/community/non-profit-advisors-program/webinar-registration/>

b) For improving the effectiveness of meetings

<http://literacybasics.ca/board-governance/effective-board-meetings/>

c) A reference for Board job descriptions & Policy Development

<http://www.governinggood.ca/resources/sample-policies-dalhousie-collection/>

d) To assist in their recruitment efforts:

<http://www.governinggood.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/A-Guide-to-Successful-Board-Recruitment.pdf>

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Submitted by: **Andrew Jarrett**

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