



**Illusions Rhythmic Gymnastics Club  
Annual Report 2015-2016**

## **Illusions Annual General Meeting**

### **~ Summation ~**

## **Gail Baird ~ President 2015-2017**

Our first official meeting was on June 16, 2015. It was at this meeting that Illusions struck our Executive Board members consisting of:

- President – Gail Baird
- Secretary – Meghan Milloy
- VP Finance – Wendy McCallum
- VP Competitive – Cherie Kelly
- VP Recreational – open at the time (filled by Myriam Bergeron)
- Technical Director – Julie Jeffery

We also filled various coordinator spots:

- Fundraising – Belinda Ferguson
- IT Support – Galit Surovkin
- Director of Special Projects – Lisa Landry
- Social Media – Kaylee Rawding

The club began in 1985 with about 10 athletes and has grown considerably to over 100.

In the past year I feel we have accomplished a lot of new business as well as our yearly goals.

Some of the highlights are:

- Creation and launch of our new website thanks to Galit
- A \$1400 Sport NS grant came through for Illusions thanks to Brett
- Newsletters created by Kaylee can be seen on our website as well as email
- Mini Comp. November 2015
- Holiday show - December 2015
- Mock Comp. February 2015
- Provincials (hosted by Inspirations) March 2016
- Atlantics Moncton April 2016
- Illusions Invitational May 2016
- York Stars Invitational May 2016
- End of year gala June 2016
- Second “try-outs” for newly named competitive programs
  - Interclub now known as Shooting Stars
  - C’s now known as Bright Stars
  - B’s now known as Blazing Stars
  - A’s now known as Capella
- We’re working on modernizing our logo.
- New coach, Julia Belittchenko, from Ontario but schooling locally! Girls love her.
- Hosted our first big “Do-it-all-at-Once” registration night...received many very positive comments about it.

## ANNUAL REPORT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR



The 2015-2016 year started on a high note as we saw our membership increase significantly from the 2014-2015 season. Illusions continued to offer recreational class to girls ages 2-14 and in September 2015 we introduced a tiny tot class (girls born in 2012-2013). Our competitive C program continued to gain momentum with 25 athletes registering for the 10-month season and our competitive A and B teams had 27 athletes in total. Illusions introduced a new program in January 2016 (Interclub Program). This program is meant to bridge the gap for athletes that are interested in the competitive program and have missed the program entry point.



Our recreation program underwent some positive changes this past year. We introduced standardized programming and structured lesson plans for our coaches and term report cards for our recreational athletes. In addition, these athletes participated in 2 demonstrations: at the Closing Ceremonies of the 2016 Provincial Championships and the Opening Ceremonies of the 2016 Illusions Invitational. They also showcased their new skills and performed at our Holiday Gala in December and our Spring Gala in June. We ended the year by hosting an Open House/Bring a Friend on the last day of classes and had a tremendous turn-out.

Our competitive program also experienced some positive changes this past year. Although one of our talented and experienced coaches/choreographers retired at the end of last season, we were able to increase our pool of coaches (recreational & competitive) with local, retired athletes. We also welcomed Julia Belittchenko in February 2016. Julia was a competitive rhythmic gymnast for 12 years in Toronto, Ontario and is currently studying in Halifax.

Our competitive teams (52 athletes) participated in two mini competitions hosted by Illusions (December 2015 and February 2016). Illusions sent 65 athletes to the 2016 Nova Scotia Provincial Championships hosted by Rhythmic Inspirations – this included 14 Interclub athletes that attended a 2-hour class from January – March. In April we took our largest competitive team ever (27 athletes, 4 coaches and 1 judge) to Moncton, New Brunswick for the 2016 Atlantic

Championships. For some of our athletes, it was their first ‘Atlantic’ competition. Although it was a long weekend with over 100 athletes, it was a positive experience for all of our athletes and coaches.

Illusions hosted its first annual Invitational Competition in May 2016. This is the first time we have had our Competitive B and C teams compete so late in the season. The benefits of extending our competitive season to mid-May was observed in so many of the athletes’ individual and group routines. The Illusions Invitational also provided the Competitive A team with an amazing opportunity to finalize their individual and group routines before heading to the York Stars competition at the end of May.

Illusions sent 14 athletes, 2 coaches and 1 judge to York Stars Invitational this year. Our athletes rose to the occasion and performed to their best ability with many of our athletes achieving their personal best performances. The high caliber of rhythmic gymnastics was appreciated by all of our athletes, coaches and parents. We also gained valuable technical information by having judging representation at the competition.



Our competitive and recreational team experienced unfortunate luck with the cancellation of the Bedford Parade of Lights in November. Although the parade is always a highlight and requires lots of prep work, we did manage to pull off a last minute team dinner/dance for our competitive team at a local pub – great team building for our athletes. Our competitive team did perform at

the NS Provincial Cheer Championships and more recently at the Bedford Days – Canada Day event. Our competitive athletes were also able to showcase their talents at our Holiday Gala in December and our Spring Gala in June.

I would like to thank all of the hard working volunteers, parents, coaches and judges for their hard work and dedication. Without your continued support Illusions would not have had such an exciting and memorable year.

Thank you to all of the Illusions Board of Directors and Executive members – so much change has happened in such a short amount of time – it's been amazing to have such committed and dedicated parent volunteers on our Board. In particular a shout out to Galit Surovkin who created our amazing website. Thank you to Belinda Ferguson (Interim VP Recreation), Myriam Bergeron (VP Recreation) and Cherie Kelly (VP Competitive) for their help and assistance in what has been a year of change at Illusions. The many, many volunteer hours have not gone unnoticed and are truly appreciated.

I look forward to the next 12 months and anticipate another busy season with even more changes and continued growth in our recreational and competitive programming. We will be working hard to implement new programs and modifications to our current programs based on the feedback we received from our coaches, judges, parents, athletes and Executive members.

Julie Jeffery  
Technical Director

## VP Competitive – Cherie Kelly

With 2015/16 being my first year in this role, I feel like we have come a long way since my first child was registered back in 2010. There are many tasks that fell on Julie this year that I assisted and supported her with. These functions are getting easier for me (us) as I learn more about the business and how things need to be handled. This year we've had many new families join our club and an all new executive team put in place to manage the business. The operation of the business continues to be a learning curve for all of us, but we're growing together as we should be.

DEMOS – Typically the club participates in 4-6 demos throughout the year. The 1<sup>st</sup> one of the season is the **Light Up Bedford Parade** at Christmas time. There was a significant amount of planning involved with this. Making sure those who were participating had the right costume for size and grouping. We needed to outsource to have a few new suits made. Thanks to Betty (Ali McLaughlin's grandmother), and Sandra Kelly (Jorjah and Phoebe Kelly's Grandmother) who both were able to get us enough costumes for all the girls. Next year we shouldn't need any more suits made. Secondly, we like to do a halftime show at the Rainmen Basketball games. Unfortunately, the Rainmen team wasn't around this year. There was a new team however the halftime slots booked up very early and we were unable to secure a spot. Thirdly, we attended the NS Cheer Provincials. This was a big success. We had approximately 12 girls participate and they were able to showcase their routines in front of a big crowd, with like-minded interests in our sport. Finally, Bedford days. There were 10 girls attending this demo and because of the weather we could only perform a small demonstration, but still loads of fun was had by all.

COMPETITIONS – **NS Provincials** was hosted by Rhythmic Inspirations this year. All A, B, C and interclub athletes competed. We put a number of parent volunteers in place to help keep the girls organized. This worked well and we will keep building on this format for future competitions. The coaches felt it was very helpful.

**Atlantics** were in Moncton NB – All A and B athletes travelled to Moncton for this competition. Better planning with some volunteers to

help the coaches would have been helpful. Too many athletes for the coaches to manage.

**York** – All A athletes competed at York this year. Being an out of province competition this allows some great exposure to a higher level of competition. The girls did very well.

First annual **Illusions Invitational** – All competitive athletes competed. This was a great event to finish off the season. Also, a really nice way to see how all the hard work pays off. The improvement over the year really shows. We had two Meet Directors (Tasha Richard and Gail Sarty) who took some of the workload away from myself and Julie. Having another go-to person for such a big event is necessary.

**TRYOUTS** – Tryouts this year were broken down by teams. The A tryouts were held separately from the B and C. The A tryouts were much smaller than B and C, therefore ran very smoothly. B and C tryouts were a much larger group. The venue (WHC) was not ideal. We ran a mandatory parent meeting during tryouts so parents knew exactly what they were committing to. A larger venue for next year (ie, HPCC) would be helpful.

**REGISTRATION** – This was our first year to conduct an “in person” registration night. I think it was a huge success. Having athletes commit and pay in June will drastically help our planning for next year. Also, having collected the fees at registration night will alleviate all the money collection throughout the year. Less time spent on collecting and reconciling fees for each event.

**DAY TO DAY TASKS** – The VP role for the competitive team was busy this year. The biggest challenges were the external communications. Many emails are sent with important information but seem to go unseen. This results in athletes showing up at the wrong place/time without the proper gear. I took many suggestions as for format of emails or content to try and simplify. This is something we need to improve on and start holding athletes (and their parents) responsible.

Cherie Kelly

# VP Recreation 2015-2016 Year Rapport.

VP Recreation since January 2016: Myriam Bergeron

VP Recreation by interim for 2015: Belinda Ferguson

First of all I would like to thank the Executive comity for welcoming me and supporting me in January. Thank you Belinda for making the transition as easy as possible for me and thank you Julie for answering my thousands of questions.

The Recreational Program has been in high demand this year with even a few classes that filled up at the beginning of the term.

Fall term classes:

<b>Class</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of athletes</b>
Wed 2009-2011	BHPCC	11
Wed 2008+	BHPCC	8
Sat 2012-2013	WHC	8
Sat 2009-2011 9am	WHC	7
Sat 2009-2011 10am	WHC	8
Sat 2008+	WHC	8
Total		50

Winter term classes:

<b>Class</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of athletes</b>
Wed 2009-2011	BHPCC	14
Wed 2008+	BHPCC	4
Sat 2012-2013	WHC	7
Sat 2009-2011 9am	WHC	5
Sat 2009-2011 10am	WHC	8
Sat 2008+	WHC	5
Total		43

Altho the second term seems to have less athletes, there was an Interclub class formed in



January that is not shown here that included many of the recreational gymnasts from the previous term. That class had 14 athletes.

During the Fall term, recreational athletes participated in the Christmas Show in December.

During the Winter term, recreational athletes participated in:

1. Mini competition, Feb. 7th, group demonstration;
2. Provincial competition hosted by Inspiration Rhythmic Gymnastics Club, group demonstration during the closing ceremony;
3. Provincial competition hosted by Illusions, group demonstration during the opening ceremony;
4. Illusions spring Gala, June 12th, class routine.

Tryouts are offered in June to recreational athletes who would like to join the competitive level.

Recreational athletes will also have the opportunity to participate in a summer camp. 2 week long sessions are offered.

The overall feedback is positive, we are putting forward these changes for next year:

1. Earlier registration date and payment requirements.
2. Creation of a recreational registration package.
3. Lowering the number of athletes in the gym at the same time.

We would like to thank the coaches who are participating in the training of the athletes in the recreational program and also to all the parents who have volunteer during the competitions and shows.

Myriam Bergeron  
VP Recreation

## **Report from VP Finance, Wendy McCallum**

This was a year of transition for Illusions financially, in that the club has grown rapidly in the last couple of years and we made the decision as a Board early in the Fall to try to get to a place where we could confidently pay Julie Jeffery for all of her time spent in both her coaching role and administrative roles as Technical Director. Previous to this year, all of Julie's administrative efforts outside of actual in-gym coaching time had been volunteered, unpaid hours. Our goal for the year was to structure programming, coaching ratios, fees, etc. in such a way to make it possible for us to pay Julie for all of her working hours, both in and out of the gym.

We were able to do this, without increasing competitive fees, by estimating Julie's hours and carefully setting & adhering to coaching to athlete ratios and maximizing the efficient use of gym rental space. We're pleased to report that Julie has been paid for all of her tracked hours in and out of the gym that fall under her role as Technical Director. We are in the process of finalizing our accounts for the year and will be presenting the year-end balance at the AGM.

Looking forward, we hope to further streamline the fee structure and collection process as well as our financial projection model for income and expenses for the club.

Wendy.