



PLRAC arts **BEat**
"Shaping Today Inspiring Tomorrow"
June/July 2007

Dawson Creek Hosts Peace Country Summer School of the Arts

Dawson Creek will be hosting its 5th annual Peace Country Summer School of the Arts throughout July and August. The Dawson Creek Art Gallery and Kiwanis Arts Centre have partnered to offer a wide variety of visual, performing, general interest classes, and workshops for all ages. Some of the programs offered include:

- Face Painting • Origami • Jewelry Making • Mask Making
- Pottery • Painting and Drawing • Mixed Media • Print

Making • Sculpture • Photography • Oil Painting •
Cartooning • Jazz • Yoga • Hip Hop • Musical Theatre •
Lyrical Dance

Information is available at the Art Gallery at 782-2601 and at the Kiwanis Art Centre at 782-9325. All Dance program registrations are taken at the Kiwanis Arts Centre. All other registration at the Dawson Creek Art Gallery. Register right away so you are not disappointed!

Peace-Liard Regional Arts Council
Shaping Today - Inspiring Tomorrow

Featured Artist: *Rebekah Rempel*



I grew up in Abbotsford and Tomslake. I attended Northern Lights College for a year before transferring to the University of Victoria's Writing Program, where I am currently majoring in Poetry. During the summer, I live in Dawson Creek with my husband Matt.

I was fortunate to be instructed by Lorna Crozier, Carla Funk, and Tim Lilburn this year. They have been huge inspirations for me, both in their teaching and their own work.

Living in Victoria, I realized that what happens in northern B.C. -- things I once considered ordinary or boring -- are unusual and interesting to people from other places. I am finally seeing the poetic potential of our landscape, culture, and way of life.

Tumbler Ridge Dinner Theater Returns

Saturday, June 23rd marks the return of Theatre On The Ridge Grizzly Valley Players' dinner theater. Last spring, this group had a sold-out venue and a requested second showing of TR Time Travel through the Musical Decades. It was the epic adventure of a mad scientist who traveled through time and space to visit all the different eras and genres of music.

This year presents the follow-up story, or as director Erin Hanna calls it, the "Sequel-Prequel", because one never knows with time travel if it happened before or after the last moment in time. It will entail different music and scenes, all musically performed by the local drama group with the actors' indisputable vocals.

Tickets will be available at the Community Centre and also at other locations listed on the posters. Members of the Grizzly Valley Players may be contacted for tickets as well. Advanced ticket prices are \$25/plate until June 10th and \$30/plate on or after June 11th. There will be a cash bar - sorry no minors. For further details contact Erin Hanna at (250) 242-3364 or grizzlyvalleyplayers@yahoo.com

Grizfest 2007

Grizfest, Tumbler Ridge's Musical festival in the foothills of the Rockies takes place this year on August 4 & 5, with the following guests:

Saturday, August 4 - Messenger; Damian Marshall; Rex Goudie; Hedley

Sunday, August 5 - Barley Wik; Heavy Things; Spirit of the West
The Battle of the Bands winner will have a 30 minute set on the Grizfest stage during the weekend.

For further information visit www.grizfest.com or contact 250-242-4246.

I often follow the advice "write about what haunts you." However, in creative writing courses, I have learned that "reality is no excuse for poetry." In other words, just because something actually happened does not justify its presence in a poem. One must invent when it serves the poem better to invent. Imagination and craft must be applied to one's experiences. So, although most of my poetry is *based* on my own experiences or those of people I know, the final draft is almost always fictional. Poetry is storytelling, which is as much about lying as it is about the truth. Often lies are more believable and reveal a deeper truth than reality. 'What really happened' is irrelevant. What matters is whether or not we believe the poem as we read it and whether or not it stays with us afterwards.

On May 16, Rebekah participated in a reading at the Dawson Creek Art Gallery with acclaimed poets Lorna Crozier and Patrick Lane, and gave a solo reading at South Peace Senior Secondary earlier that day.

Cowbirds

Every spring they built nests
in the combine. Sometimes baby birds fell,
landed among last summer's dust, wings still wet
from the shell, eyes blue and sightless as saskatoons.

My sister rescued them, cupped each bony body,
picked chaff from their new feathers.
She tucked them among grass and twigs
in a shoe box, knelt on the floor to feed them
crushed-up worms through straws,
their throats flickering.

When they died,
I helped her bury them
in the clay by the dugout, marked their graves
with crosses made from popsicle sticks.

Only one survived. Afraid it wouldn't learn
to fly, she crafted a cowbird puppet,
flapping the felt wings of her fingers
around the watchful head.

One morning we found it looping the kitchen.
It slipped out the open door and my sister followed-
running across the yard,
as though she too might escape the ground
and disappear into summer's blinding blue.

Rebekah Rempel