

## Arts Review

# Airline brings in one judge

Four adjudicators are travelling to Fort St. John to judge the North Peace Performing Arts Festival.

Time Air is assisting with the cost of travel for the adjudicators by bringing in the dance adjudicator from Calgary. The other adjudicators will come from Victoria and Prince George.

Heather Lawrence-Murdock owns and manages two dance studios where she teaches tap and jazz in Calgary. She is the artistic director of the nationally and internationally acclaimed dance group called Calgary Dance Express.

Lawrence-Murdock chose the dancer for the movie "Stardancer", has judged talent contests at the Calgary Stampede and has managed the Calgary Stampeder Cheerleaders and the Jimmy Dean Dancers.

Lawrence-Murdock has achieved all levels in the Brian Foley syllabus and the Al Gilbert syllabus in tap and jazz. Her accomplishments in ballet and stage dance along with her other achievements make her a perfect adjudicator for the varied competition in Fort St. John.

Time Air is providing Lawrence-Murdock's airfare to Fort St. John.

The piano adjudicator, Susan de-Burgh, has studied with Doris Crofton, then with Dr. Robin Wood at the Victoria Conservatory of Music, and Frank Mannheimer in Minnesota.

She has studied in Devon, England and has most recently given solo, duet and chamber recitals, played piano and celeste with the Victoria Symphony.

De-Burgh has performed on radio and television, also. She often adjudicates at festivals throughout the province. She will be travelling from Victoria to adjudicate in Fort St. John then immediately to Penticton to adjudicate there.

Paul Meister of Prince George will adjudicate the Winds and Strings Section of the North Peace Performing Arts Festival.

Paul has been a member of the London Symphony in Ontario and the Victoria Symphony Orchestra. He graduated from the University of Western Ontario in Violin performance. He has taught the Suzuki violin method in Prince George for

nine years and also teaches band.

The adjudicator of the vocal and choral section is John Unsworth who has had three seasons with the Prince George Symphony Orchestra and also directs the Prince George Symphony Orchestra.

At the age of 17, in 1955, John made his debut as a conductor. He has

studied in Holland, Austria and England and has mastered the keyboard, composition and double-bass with his earliest training as a cathedral chorister.

The Performing Arts Festivals throughout the province can send the best of the region to compete in the B.C. Festival of Arts in North

Vancouver, May 22-27.

The adjudicators for each festival are recruited from outside the region to assure fair recommendations to the B.C. Festival of Arts and to bring in a different educational cross-section of training.

## Festival running since '45

The North Peace Performing Arts Festival has its beginning in 1945 with the Music, Dance and Elocution Festival.

Through the years, the festival has had varying degrees of success and a fluctuation of numbers of entries.

The 1991 North Peace Performing Arts Festival of the Arts has over 800 entries involving over 1,000 participants in piano, dance, instrumental and voice competitions.

The organization of each year's festival requires months of preparation. The association with the B.C. Festivals Association

representing 29 other Performing Arts Festivals in B.C. assures a standard of adjudication and high level of skill and talent for the competitors that are chosen to go to the B.C. Festival of Arts. The Performing Arts Festival also provides a venue for all participants to perform their best and aspire to greater heights in the future.

In preparation for the Festival in Fort St. John, the adjudicators must be identified, the syllabus printed and distributed, the program and awards organized and the venues booked.

Volunteers are required at each venue for the entire competition to assure the best atmosphere for each performer.

This year's executive of the Performing Arts Festival has been working since September of 1990.

The average budget of the Performing Arts Festival is \$8,000-\$10,000, which is required to cover printing, postage, publicity and adjudicators.

The costs for the adjudicators are the largest portion of each budget. The adjudicators are paid a fee in line with the recommendation of the B.C. Festival Association.

Their travel, meals and rooms are also paid by each regional festival.





Square dance has been a popular entry into the North Peace Performing Arts Festival. Charlie Lake Elementary School has entered square dance this year. The above picture is from a 1980's Festival.

assistance of community-minded businesses and individuals.

The festival executive would like to thank all the supporters and patrons of the 1991 festival without whom the festival would not be possible.

New volunteers are required to produce next year's Festival of Arts in Fort St John.

Please feel free to contact anyone of the following current executive to offer your assistance for next year. 1991 Executive: Co-ordinator, Sue Popesku; Secretary, Noelle Jellison; Provincial Secretary, Veda Brown; Treasurer, Elward Jellison; Awards, Debbie Potter.

For further information phone the Artspace 785-1991.

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# Performing Arts Festival deadline is Thursday

## PERFORMING ARTS FESTIVAL DEADLINE COMING UP

The upcoming North Peace Performing Arts Festival will attract entries from regional communities in dance, music, vocal, speech arts, instrumental and choir.

The Festival, scheduled for April 15-21, has an entry deadline on Thursday, Feb. 28.

Schools and community groups and individuals will enter over 1,500 competitive selections in the 1991 annual performing festival.

Four different venues are used for the Performing Arts Festival to accommodate the large numbers of participants.

Dance will be held at the North Peace Secondary School, Piano at the Mennonite Brethren Church, Vocal and Instrumental at the Immaculata Hall and Speech Arts to be announced.

Adjudicators for the competition are travelling from Victoria,

Calgary, Prince George and Dawson Creek and may select individuals and groups to represent the North Peace at the B.C. Festival of Arts in North Vancouver, which takes place during the last part of May.

The syllabus is available at the Artspace, from community music teachers, dance teachers and from each of the schools in School Districts 60, 81 and 59.

Tickets for each of the adjudication sessions will be available at each venue, and the tickets for the Honors Performance at 2 p.m. on Sunday, April 21, will be available at the Artspace.

The Performing Arts Festival is made possible through the generous contributions from community groups, businesses and individuals.

All contributions receive a tax-deductible receipt. Please contact the Arts Council in the Artspace for further information.

# ARTS-ITORIAL

**By Sue Popesku**

Preparations for the North Peace Performing Arts Festival continue in order to be ready for the April 15 opening when scores of young people will participate in dance, piano, vocal and instrumental competitions.

A complete floor for the dance competition must be built of plyboard and 2x4s to protect the North Peace Secondary School gym floor from damage by tap shoes.

Co-ordinating the construction of the dance floor is Teresa Ruddell of the Northern Dance Theatre Society. Teresa has salvaged some of the staging used in the temporary Before Stage and has spent hours with volunteer workers in making the modules that will fit together to make the 30'x40' stage.

According to Teresa, the stage must be completed before the time allowed in the North Peace Secondary School gym. "We have only a few hours of setup time before the adjudication begins," Teresa said in a recent interview. "The sections can be brought in and banded together faster than trying to build it on the spot." The festival can only have use of the NPSS gym for one school day, Friday, April 19. Scheduling is tight and setup time is at a premium.

Each time a stage is required for a production in Fort St. John, effort and money is repeatedly funneled into reconstruction. As a volunteer dedicated to dance development in Fort St. John, Teresa has worked on 12 separate stages.

"Not only do we have to build a different stage each time but we always have a hassle of finding a big enough place for the stage plus the audience," she said.

In order for the Performing Arts Festival to have use of the gym, the NPSS physical education classes are put out of their classroom.

The problems are two fold. Using a gymnasium or other makeshift performance spaces puts the regular uses of that space out of a venue and makes extra work with added costs for the production group. The drawbacks result in fewer performances and less opportunity for local shows, recitals and performances.

Once again, a stage will be constructed and the show will go on with hopes for the future that the extra energy and money can be channelled for better us in the new Arts Centre.