



## Sand Sensations BC Next 3 Years 2015-2017

September 2014

The Fort St. John Community Arts Council has reviewed the first three years (2012-2014) of Sand Sensations BC. Originated and organized by the FSJ Arts Council as a cultural tourism initiative, this international event has attracted participation from world champion sand carvers, local artists and emerging artists from as far away as Prince George and Grand Prairie. Thousands of people visit the site each year during the event and well into the Fall.

***The Fort St. John Arts Council will continue to organize SAND SENSATIONS BC for the next three years leading to the biggest SAND event for 2017. As a year of celebrations, 2017 is the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Building of the Alaska Highway, the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Canadian Confederation and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Fort St. John Community Arts Council.***

### Benefits of Continuing SAND SENSATIONS BC:

- Peace Island Park is the perfect venue for the event with unlimited amount of sand close by on banks of the river. The sand is of rare quality with natural clay to hold the sculptures together through the winter months.
- The site in Taylor is a well-appointed camp ground visible from the famous Alaska Highway travelled by every RV, car and truck heading North to Alaska or South. It is also located at the Peace River Bridge which spans the Mighty Peace River, the fourth longest river in Canada.
- The setting provides a wilderness environment for family recreational opportunities and natural elements for healthy daily activities in the summer.
- Peace Island Park also hosts a number of other events which draw visitors to see the sculptures. Each year Taylor's Gold Panning Championships are held the last weekend of Sand Sensations BC. In 2015, the World Jet Boat Championships (Can/US/Mex/NZ) will be held July 20, 21, 22, 2015.
- The FSJ Community Arts Council has an effective and efficient team in place to organize Sand Sensations BC. Enthusiastic sponsors are committed for the next events. In-kind contributions of equipment and supplies have made it possible to improve the event each year.

### Challenges of Moving Forward:

- Cash contributions are minimal and the Arts Council's initial investment into the first year of Sand Sensations has not yet been recovered. However, all invoices have been paid each year and the event may be able to gain some ground in the next 3 years.
- No funds are available for promotions and publicity. The event dates and opportunities have not reached the regional communities except through free sources and word of mouth. Taylor has included the event in a few of their annual publication ads. As a regional event located in Taylor and organized by the Fort St. John Arts Council, Sand Sensation BC is a REGIONAL EVENT. Regional, provincial and even national promotions moving toward 2017 would benefit the entire region.

- Planning for 2017 and events all along the 1500 miles of the Alaska Highway, Sand Sensations BC has the potential of being one of the MAJOR EVENTS for 2017 or will remain one of the “community” events. This will be determined by how much emphasis and “ownership” is demonstrated by the current dollars spent on tourism and related publications and the willingness of regional communities to promote Sand Sensations BC.

## What Three more years looks like:

	2015	2016	2017
Theme:	Marvel-us-Sand (Superheroes) Introducing Coloured Sand	TBA Coloured Sculpture	TBA Huge Sculpture in Honour of the Al Hwy
Promotion:	Regional Focus Chambers/Tourism Centres/ Regional News/publications PG/GP	Provincial focus BC/Albt/Washington/ West Jet publication	Invite Canada Potential Celebrity?
Involvement:	Family and Amateur Carving Competitions	Corporate Competitions	Regional and Politicians Competitions including GP/PG
International Carvers	Five	Six plus one local	Eight
Partners	School Classes (Spring) Summer Day Camps PLRAC (Regional Arts Council) NEAT program Sponsors-----cannot do this without them----- Taylor-----same location-----year round highway signage-----	Planned Field Trips Summer Camps (+DC) Northern BC NEAT environmental	SD #60/#59 Educational Modules Planned Picnics/Nature hikes/ Yukon NEAT educational

## Changes for 2015:

New Features for 2015 and on:

Parade float in the Taylor Gold Panning Parade on Friday Night.

Foster new partnerships.

Increase Family and Amateur entries.

Crew Position changes:

Enhance kitchen and support staff.

Replace site manager position with ground crew hand.

Event manager to manage the entire site at all times.

**SAND SENSATIONS BC 2015 at Peace Island Park, Taylor BC July 27-August 2**

**2015 Theme is *Marvel-us-Sand A Salute to Superheroes***

**An event of the Fort St. John Community Arts Council**

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For Immediate Release

March 18, 2015

## A Shift in the SAND

Sand carving at Peace Island Park this year is in for a change. The Fort St. John Community Arts Council will not be organizing SAND SENSATIONS BC for 2015 after 3 very successful years.

Sand Sensations BC was established to bring international sand carvers to the Peace Country and to develop another form of artistic expression for creative residents while attracting visitors to the area. Peace Island Park in Taylor was the perfect location at the crossroads of the famous Alaska Highway and the Mighty Peace River. Sand Sensations BC was also the most northern sand carving event in BC and the only one on a river rather than a lake or coastal beach.

Local sand from the banks of the Peace River is a rare mix of sand and clay making it possible for the sculptures to last through the winter and still be viewed after the Spring thaw. Thousands of people were drawn to the site in July to enjoy the sculptures by professional artists and to try their hand at sand sculpting as well. Visitors came from as far as Grande Prairie and Prince George to see the sculptures and travellers on the Alaska Highway stopped to take in the sight.

Sand Sensations relies totally on the sponsorship and good will of the businesses and individuals in the region. Taylor provided the site at no cost. Nels Ostero donated the sand and Poor Boy Trucking hauled it to the site. Generous contributions of site equipment, trailers and tents, water and more were the ultimate example of community support for the project, according to the organizers.

The Chairman of the Arts Council, Rosemary Landry said, "The difficulty lies in the amount of monetary support required in staging Sand Sensations each year." There is no means to sustain the project over the long term without a multi-year commitment of funds. Many events like this can generate funds through an entry fee but the nature and location of this event makes that difficult. All fundraising efforts by the Arts Council in the past 3 years have gone into Sand Sensations BC and the project just breaks even each year. "We organized Sand for three years and realize that it can be a huge draw for local creativity, family activity and tourism," said Landry. "But without an investment of annual funding from another source, the Arts Council cannot sustain the program".

The Fort St. John Community Arts Council has a number of other projects this year which focus on community enhancement and welcoming visitors to Fort St. John this summer. Locally created images with a "Take Flight" theme will be featured on the street banners downtown from May to September. Hand painted herbal pots complete with 5 seedlings and potting soil are for sale prior to Mother's Day and can be viewed in the window of the NE NEWS from April 12- May 8. The third Artwalk to 30 stores showcasing 40 artists will be launched June 19 and run until July 18.

Twenty-eight arts groups are members of the Fort St. John Arts Council and represent at least three quarters of the population of Fort St. John who either actively take part in the arts or enjoy the arts as spectators. Children's activities, lessons and entertainment rate high in most of these groups. The Fort St. John Arts Council is open to everyone and convenes the third Wednesday of each month at 12 noon in the Artspost at 10320 94 Avenue.

For further information, please contact:

**FORT ST. JOHN COMMUNITY ARTS COUNCIL BOX 6474, Fort St. John, BC V1J 4H9**

**250-787-2781 [www.fsjarts.org](http://www.fsjarts.org) email: [info@fsjarts.org](mailto:info@fsjarts.org)**

February 15, 2016

Re: SAND SENSATIONS BC 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

The Fort St. John Arts Council is pleased to announce that Jocelyn Eisert of Bizzbody Events will be continuing to organize SAND SENSATIONS for 2017 in honour of the 75<sup>th</sup> Celebrations of the Building of the Alaska Highway. 2017 will be a banner year for tourists and other visitors to the Peace Country and SAND SENSATIONS BC will add a special attractions to enjoy.

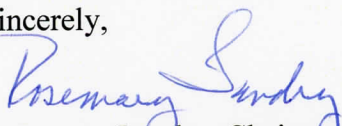
The Fort St. John Community Arts Council and Bizzbody Events initiated SAND SENSATIONS BC in 2012, to provide creative and artistic, outdoor activities for families and visitors during the summer. Bizzbody will continue with the SAND event for 2017 with the Arts Council's support rather than as a full partner. The Arts Council's mandate is to initiate festivals, projects and programs that do not exist in the Peace Country and build them until they can further develop on their own. Once the event becomes viable, the Arts Council sanctions the event but cannot continue to organize it. With 35 member groups encompassing all the creative arts genres in the North Peace, the Arts Council has many demands on its limited resources.

SAND SENSATIONS BC has been a very successful festival at Peace Island Park, Taylor in 2012, 2013, and 2014, thanks to the support of the District of Taylor and the many sponsors and volunteers. The sand sculptures remained standing for many months after this popular event to the enjoyment of all the campers and visitors in the area. The longevity of the artwork was a surprise to everyone and a testament to the unique quality of the Peace River sand donated by Nels Ostero Sand and Gravel of Taylor.

SAND SENSATIONS BC is the most Northern sand festival in BC; the only festival located in the interior of BC and in a camp ground; and strategically situated on the banks of the Peace River where the famous Alaska Highway crosses. The sand is a perfect mixture of sand and clay allowing the sculptures to have fine-chiseled detail and a longer-lasting lifetime, more than any other sand carving event in North America.

The Board of Directors of the Arts Council encourages you to continue your support of SAND SENSATIONS BC at Peace Island Park in Taylor BC. Bizzbody Events will make SAND 2017 bigger and better and a signature event for Taylor. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or discussion at 250-787-2781 or [info@fsjarts.org](mailto:info@fsjarts.org).

Sincerely,



Rosemary Landry, Chairman Fort St. John Arts Council