

ARTS

Wine festival tabled for 2009

The Fort St. John Community Arts Council has been faced with the difficult decision to table what would be the 2nd Annual Crushed Grapes Wine Festival this Spring. In this difficult time of Provincial budget cuts and financial belt-tightening, it's hard to ignore the fact that this year may look a little different than previous ones; a sentiment no doubt felt by a lot of organizations, particularly the non-profit sector.

Like any not-profit organization, the Fort St. John Community Arts Council operates on limited resources both financially and in terms of man-power. Several contributing factors caused the

Fort St. John Arts Council Board to examine its programs this year and this led to postponing what was seen as a potentially risky event from a financial standpoint.

Tara O'Donnell



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Some may wonder, why have a wine festival at all - what do the arts have to do with wine anyway? I suppose now is hardly the time to point out that wine and other celebratory spirits have long been used to get the creative juices flowing, right? Okay, if you don't buy that argument, I can't say that I blame you, but the truth be told, a wine festival is a wonderful way to learn the art of wine tasting, not to mention it's a whole lot of fun. The Crushed Grapes Wine

Festival serves as a fund-raiser for the Art Council which delivers a unique and elegant approach to wine-tasting. However, in light of impending budget cuts and tough economic times ahead, the Arts Council is confident that it is making the right decision. Arts Council Director Sue Popesku says it's important that the Arts Council plan wisely during this time of restraint. She says, "We hope that the community will understand that this program will be omitted this year since we are tightening our belt as the rest of Canada seems to be doing."

Though the Crushed Grapes Wine Festival, which was set for March 28, 2009, will not take place this year, the Arts Council is eager to begin planning for what is sure to be a spectacular event next year. We hope that you will join us in raising a glass to Crushed Grapes 2010.



Submitted Photo

Sommelier Tim Ellison leading a wine tasting event last year.

Peace region arts councils receive provincial funding

HIEDI IRVINE
ALASKA HIGHWAY NEWS

There were a few less starving artists in B.C. after an announcement that over 260 grants had been awarded to artists and organizations, ranging from diverse creative disciplines throughout the province.

The Province awarded local arts and culture councils in the Peace River area almost \$55,000.

The Fort St. John Community Arts Council received \$16,275, the Chetwynd Community Arts Council Society got \$7,177, the South Peace Community Arts Council received \$10,770 and the Peace-Liard Regional Arts Council was given \$20,500.

Director of the Fort St. John Community Arts Council, Sue Popesku said arts councils throughout the province receive the basic assistance grant every year after sending a detailed application.

The money received by the various councils is based on the number of people in the communities, as well as how far the communities are from Victoria.

"Up until now we've received about \$12-13,000 but because there's been more money put into community arts in the entire province, our amount has gone up to \$16,000 this year," said Popesku.

The grants come from the BC Arts Council's annual funding budget. The council aimed an additional \$7 million towards arts and culture groups throughout the province.

Popesku said their council was pleased, not just because of the increase in funding, but because the arts are being better recognized.

"What we're delighted in is more that the provincial government is looking to community arts and the community arts councils. They see a very viable function within the whole province, within the arts and culture and heritage scene," she said.

The council works on a budget of



Hiedi Irvine/AHN

Chairwoman of the Fort St. John Community Arts Council, Lisa Bush was delighted to hear of the council's \$16,275 grant from the province last week. She is seen here in front of two looms at the council's Arts Post, which the money will help maintain.

approximately \$150,000 a year, and most of the money goes towards its one full-time employee, and the running of the Arts Post.

Chairwoman of the Fort St. John Community Arts Council, Lisa Bush said the funding will help with the day-to-day operations, and it will go a long way.

"It means that we can continue for another year, pretty much," she said.

Peace River South MLA Blair Lekstrom made the announcement last week and said he felt the most important issue concerning arts and culture in the province is the contribution the councils make in their communities.

"What we like to do is make sure that we can ensure that our arts and culture community in the different

societies around the province remain vibrant and able to contribute to their communities and to the young artist and older artists, to make sure that we continue to enjoy what they provide for us, which is an incredible experience," said Lekstrom.

He continued, saying sometimes it was easy to over-look the importance of arts and culture in a community.

"I get to see the important work that they do, the contribution they make to our communities and really to a thriving province, so it's very important that we invest where possible in a way that we can support our artists and up and coming arts and culture people that are working so hard to not just make their lives better but the lives of others around them," he said.



BOOKMARK CANVASES

APR 22, 2009

Aleisha Hendry/AHN

Local artist Nicole Parker shows off the Fort St. John Community Arts Council's Art That Moves You bookmarks as part of the B.C. Arts and Culture Week celebration. The bookmarks are made from last year's Art That Moves You panels – the panels that will be on city buses this summer will be made into bookmarks next year. The bookmarks are available at the Fort St. John Public Library.

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Several Members of Fort St. John Community Arts Council Receive New Computers

Eleven charities and non-profit groups in northeast communities are getting new computers from Telus to help them continue providing important community services.

Telus is helping during these tough economic times by offering computers to northern B.C. organizations that need updated technology. Eleven groups in northeast communities expressed interest when Telus put the word out

in January, including the Fort Nelson Family Development Society, the Fort St. John Community Arts

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especially to those organizations providing emotional, physical, educational, and financial support in their

Council and the Chamber of Commerce of Fort St. John, Dawson Creek's Big Brothers and Big Sisters organization, the Family Resource Centre of Chetwynd, and Tumbler Ridge's Children's Centre.

In total, 39 organizations across B.C.'s northern region will welcome new computer equipment. "In the current economic climate, it's critical that everyone reaches out and offers a helping hand,

communities," said Michelle Gaites, director of Telus Technology Operations in Prince George. "These computers will be used for emergency service support, learning development, educational research, and so much more. I'm so proud to be a part of Telus' goal to give where we live by supporting local communities."

The United Way generously stepped up to coordinate this initiative, and distribute the computers to those organizations needing new equipment. The Fort St. John Community Arts Councils found that several of its member groups were in need of new computers. Among those organizations taking advantage of Telus' offer are the Northeast Aboriginal Artworks Society, Fort St. John Literacy Society, North Peace

Cultural Centre, and Stage North.

Jean McFadden, Executive Director for the Fort St. John Literacy Society says they plan to use the computer as a teaching aid. She explains, "[the computer] will allow our tutors and learners to access online courses and to run our English as a Second Language software-based instructional programs. It is much appreciated!"

The Fort St. John Community Arts Council is very grateful to TELUS for their incredibly generous donation and to United Way for sharing this opportunity which could then be passed on to the various member groups. Having access to these computers will go a long way in aiding each of these non-profit organizations.

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Submitted Photo

Local artist Wendy Wheat (left) and her daughter, Shayla Wheat, stand with Wendy's panel from last year's Art That Moves You. Wendy has also painted a panel for this year's project.

Art on the move

The Art That Moves You project is back on the move again! This year's artists have been selected and are busy painting their panels in the 2009 theme: Branching Out. Fort St. John is the proud recipient of this year's Forest Capital of BC Award and what better way than to celebrate than by expressing it through art?

Each year, the Fort St. John Community Arts Council partners with the City of Fort St. John and BC Transit to deliver this exciting program. Eight panels in total are painted by local artists, which are then placed on public transit buses during the summer months. Come spring, the Arts Council creates bookmarks from the previous year's panels.

These bookmarks are released during Arts and Culture Week in April each year at the Fort St. John Public Library. They are free to the public and are available while supplies last.

This year's theme, Branching Out, conjures up images of nature and celebrates green initiatives. In fact, this year, the Assembly of BC Arts Councils awarded supplemental funding to those arts councils whose projects included a "green" component in order to support environmental awareness. The Fort St. John Community Arts Council, in order to meet this challenge, now reuses old advertising panels donated by Peace Country Transit. The

advertising panels are given a second life and serve as a canvas for the Art That Moves You project. Rather than purchasing new material to paint on, the advertising panels, which would otherwise be thrown away, are recycled into art.

This project celebrates the tremendous talent of our local artists while displaying art in a unique way. Artist Wendy Wheat, who has now participated in this program two years in a row, believes the program is a fantastic way to get involved in the community and do something creative.

Each year eight artists are selected for the program. Artists may submit photos of their artwork and a brief description of why they would like to be considered for the program. Submissions may be made at any time throughout the year, though artist selection for the Art That Moves You program takes place in February. Wheat maintains the real reason she

wanted to participate again this year was because she has always wanted to do a painting of a Cedar Wax Wing, a bird native to the Peace Region.

"I was really happy to hear the theme was Branching Out. It gave me an opportunity to paint my favorite bird. They're quite frequent visitors at my house, but not many people get a chance to see them close up," said Wheat.

Artists participating in this year's project are: Catherine Ruddell, Sonja Butts, Wendy Wheat, Suzon Anne Tremblay, Shannon Butler, Aleisha Hendry, Julia Roe, and Eliza Stanford. For sponsorship opportunities, please contact the Fort St. John Community Arts Council at 250-787-2781.

The new panels will be up on public transit buses later this month. Who knows, you may just spot a masterpiece on your way to work today! Keep an eye out, we're on the move!

Tara O'Donnell



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Art in the Park a fun Canada Day tradition

Marking the 9th annual Art in the Park, yesterday's festivities included an Artist Show and Sale and the Children's Art Activities. Despite the less than seasonal weather, Art in the Park was a lot of fun. Just ask any of those glitter-covered kids gathered around for the art activities.

Tara O'Donnell



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Art in the Park is a joint initiative between the City of Fort St. John and the Fort St. John Community Arts Council and is part of the annual Canada Day celebrations. Supporting local artists and crafts persons within the community is important and this event showcases the incredible amount of local talent within our community. This event also serves as an opportunity for member groups of the Arts Council to share information about their organization. Some participants come to sell their goods while others demonstrate their craft.

Local artist, Donna Folk, has par-

ticipated in the Artist Show and Sale for three years now. When asked why she likes Art in the Park she says, "I like to do it because I am a

people person and like getting out and talking to people. People always say 'oh I can't paint' but I like to prove them wrong. Anyone can do it". Folk has been an artist for the past 45 years and teaches oil painting. She is certified with Alexander Art and the Bob Ross Company.

Tanya Shymko, the coordinator leading the Children's Art Activities this year, says what she loves most about working with kids and art is watching them express themselves in unique ways.

"They all have different ideas and one of the ways that they can show their personalities is through art," she said.

For more information on the Fort St. John Community Arts Council and its programs, please contact the ArtsPost at (250) 787-2781.



Submitted Photo

Children's Art Activities were enjoyed by people of all ages on Canada Day 2008.

Pipeline to the Arts

ART EXHIBITIONS

- Children's Art Exhibition, Peace Gallery North.

MUSIC

- All Ages Concert, July 4, 6 p.m., Lido Theatre.
- Julian Austin, July 2, The New Frontier.
- Jimmy Rankin, July 8, 7 p.m., Lido Theatre.
- Sean Ashby, July 9, 6 p.m., Whole Wheat and Honey.
- Daniel Wesley in concert, July 9, 8 p.m., Egan's Pub.
- Miss Quincy and the Ramblers, July 11, 6 p.m., Whole Wheat and Honey.

Parthenon sculptures to stay in Britain

ATHENS, Greece — Greece's culture minister said Monday he was not planning to go to court to get back the Parthenon sculptures from Britain.

Antonis Samaras said the new Acropolis Museum that opened this month will boost Greece's bid for the works, which British diplomat Lord Elgin took from the site 200 years

ago.

Samaras said he will "make the greatest effort possible" to repatriate the 2,500-year-old sculptures but ruled out any kind of lawsuit.

"At this moment I have nothing of the sort in mind," he said.

Originally part of the ancient Parthenon temple, the marbles are in

the British Museum, which says it legally owns them and will not give them back.

Greece counters that the sculptures were looted from a work of art so important that its fragments should all be shown together in the new Athens museum.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Submitted Photo

Arts Council Directors Pam Clemen and Sue Popesku manned the Fort St. John Community Arts Council's pie booth at last year's North Peace Fall Fair.

Community Arts Council Serves up Pie with a Side of Arts and Culture

Tara O'Donnell



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How is it we always find ourselves in this same position each year? As summer winds down, we begin shifting our attention from back yard barbecues to getting the kids into back to school mode. The good news is that the North Peace Fall Fair is coming up, which is a wonderful time to celebrate the bounties of our region, including livestock competitions, tractor pulls, arts and crafts, and pie. That's right, pie.

This is the second year the Fort St. John Community Arts Council will be there serving up homemade pies, fresh coffee, cold drinks, and ice cream treats. The proceeds serve as a fundraiser for the ArtsPost building, home of the Arts Council. We know that slogans like 'Word's Best Pie' and the 'Best Coffee Ever' may sound a little like bragging, but we're not shy. We're crafty people here at the Arts Council, and no one can argue that baking the perfect homemade pie is an art form in its own right!

The North Peace Fall Fair is a two day annual Fall Fair held in North Pine, 21 kilometers north of Fort St John. The address is 15177 Rose Prairie Road. The fair will be held on August 15 and 16. Come experience a cultural event like none other, showcasing the North Peace. We'll have the coffee on for you.