

## **FORT ST. JOHN ARTS COUNCIL**

December 17, 2003

### **WHAT IS THE ARTS COUNCIL**

- The Fort St. John Community Arts Council is dedicated to the development of arts and cultural activities in the North Peace to enhance the quality of life in the North.
- The Arts Council has twenty-one member groups representing thousands of people who participate (dancers, musicians, actors, craftspeople), support participation (parents, buyers and sponsors), and/or enjoy watching (audiences and individuals).
- The Arts Council strives to initiate new activities and spaces for arts development to add to the rich fabric of resources currently available.
- The Arts Council is an organization focused on communication of materials, sharing of resources, and searching for additional support to allow creativity to flourish in the North.

### **WHERE HAVE WE COME FROM**

- Performing arts festivals, theatre productions and concerts have been taking place in Fort St. John as far back as 1930. Fort St. John won the first Hamber Award at the BC Theatre Festival for an original production in the 50's.
- In 1967, the Province of British Columbia provided a grant to establish arts councils throughout the province. The Fort St. John Arts Council has been a driving force for arts development since then.
- A pottery studio in the hockey arena was the first established arts space in Fort St. John in the late 60's.
- Northern Lights College had a mandate to provide music, art, drama, and pottery classes in its initial development in the 70's. This has since been erased due to the emphasis on numbers of students required to keep various courses on the curriculum. Brian Paisley, the first drama instructor, at the college moved on to Edmonton to establish the famous Edmonton Fringe Festival. Mike Plutonon, another drama instructor has become a TV actor seen often in the X-files, Stargate, and various other Vancouver based shows. Musician, Merrill Flewelyn works as a coroner in Dawson Creek now.
- The Artspace Classes created in 1984 registered 350 children on the first day in the space now occupied by Coachman's Men's Wear.
- The North Peace Cultural Centre opened in 1992 to have the first proper theatre in FSJ of 413 seats, a public library, an Artspace activity area and the first public art gallery.
- The BC Festival of the Arts took place in Fort St. John in 2000.

**WHERE ARE WE GOING**

The Arts Council is at another milestone in the history of arts in the North Peace. We have

- a very active council with 20-25 people attending each monthly meeting.
- twenty-one member groups representing thousands of citizens.
- active committees working on community projects.
- a fund for student awards and educational pursuits
- the beginning of a fund for work space for the Arts Council and groups
- a developing program with media relations
- a recently established coordinator position

**BUDGET**

The budget and financial statements must reflect the collective plan of the Arts Council to further development and professional management of funds.

Questions to Reflect Upon

- What percentage of the budget should be allocated to
  - Administration (coordinator contract/expenses)
  - Communication (newsletter/postage/stationary)
  - Promotion/Advertising of the arts (media relations)
  - Increase in the fund for awards/educational pursuits
  - Grants to member groups
  - Community projects (snow sculpture/ice sculpture/flower pot)

Adm	Com	Pro/Adv	Awd/Educ	Grts/Grps	Com Proj.	
%	%	%	%	%	%	= 100%

- Should the Arts Council be asking for more support from the City of Fort St. John? Currently the Arts Council receives \$8500 annually from the City and in 2003 an additional one-time grant of \$10,720 for the pilot project of a coordinator position.
- Should the Arts Council actively pursue funds for a work space for spinners and weavers, quilters, pottery and/or an Arts Council office?

The Arts Council will be making a presentation to the City of Fort St. John in mid-January 2004. Please make sure that Lauri has your group information and copies of any newspaper articles.

*Thanks for your interest and commitment in making the arts an important part of the fabric of the community in the North Peace.*

*Sue Popesku*

## SOME FACTS ABOUT THE ARTS COUNCIL

### What Does The Arts Council Do?

- Networks with visual, performing and administrative arts groups in the community, region, and province.
- Promotes and advocates for arts and cultural development within the community
- Builds capacity for arts and cultural by supporting arts initiatives in Fort St. John
- Conducts cultural events with the City of Fort St. John and community partners to enhance, entertain and train residents and visitors of the community.
- Administers the Artspost which is the office of the Arts Council and a studio space for potters, spinners and weavers as they grow.
- Builds capacity in the arts by providing resources for people with specific creative interests to develop their talents and skills.
- Works with tourism to develop cultural tourism programs to further impact the economic benefit of arts and culture to the community.
- Acknowledges the achievements of both high school and college students in awarding arts related scholarships and bursaries.

### What is the impact on the community?

**ARTS COUNCIL MEMBER GROUPS** based on 2009 statistics

NOTE: \*arts portion of budget only for organization that are not primarily arts oriented

<b>VISUAL ARTS</b>	<b>Members/Part-St</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Wkshp/Retreat</b>
Peace Arts Gallery Society (PAGS)	8 750	6000	60,000	3 workshops/sum sch
Flying Colours Artists Association	27	3000	20,000	5 workshops
Oil Painters of the Peace	52 200	300	500	weekly
FSJ Country Quilters Guild 2011/25th	45	1200	20,000	6 workshop
NP Potters Guild	25	100	26,000	1 workshop
NP Spinners and Weavers	20	600	5,000	5 workshops
Northeast Aboriginal Arts Works Society	(newly formed group)			
<i>(Knitters Guild, individual fabric artists, painters and potters)</i>				

### **DANCE AND MOVEMENT**

FSJ Irish Dance Society	20	250	33,000	2 workshops
Northern Dance Theatre Society	55 200	1200	80,000	2 wksp/sum sch
The Move Dance Society	35 150	1000	27,000	2 wksp/sum sch
Slainte Society of Irish Dance	25	500	16,000	2 workshops
Mystic Borealis Belly Dancers	4 12	1500	2,500	no workshops
NP Gymnastics	500	(280,000)	*5,000	
<i>(Scottish Dancers, Square Dancers, Dhara Belly Dancers, Ballroom, Bollywood/African/Salsa)</i>				

## MUSIC

SD #60 Band	80	1000	32,000	1 retreat
NP Music Teachers Association	8 100	400	4,000	no workshops

*(Singers and Songwriters, Scottish Pipers, Unto Him, Therapy 101, Children's Choir, Community Choir, local rock bands, vocal artists and musicians)*

## PERFORMANCE

Peace River North Performing Arts Festival	400	2000	35,000	2 workshops
Peace River Zone Theatre Festival	120	800	19,000	2 workshops
Stage North Theatre Society	120	4000	125,000	2 workshops

*(Bridge to Broadway, NPSS Musical Theatre, SD #60 school plays)*

## ARTS EDUCATION OR INVOLVEMENT

Community Arts Council	28 groups/25 indiv	6000	109,000	
FSJ Film Society	7 20	1000	7,000	
FSJ Literacy Society	100		100,000	
Ecole Central School PAC	20 400	900	( 12,000) *8,000	
Artspace	18 8	1100	82,000	classes/whsp/Sum Sch
FSJ Women's Resource	40	400	(19,000) *3,000	
FSJ Association for Community Living			*4,000	
NP Historical Society/Museum	110	Call 787-0430 Wed 11:30	large facility	

*(FSJ Public Library, North Peace Cultural Society, individual historians and collectors)*

## BUSINESSES

*(CAC members but not included in the impact statistics)*

Northern Groove

Retro Relics

Angela Fehr Watercolours

*(Peebles Weaving, Kilnhouse Studio, Patches and Pieces, Photography Studios, Eagle Vision, Motion Media, Image Build, Studio 2 Stage, The Move Dance Centre, Simply Music, Systems by Trail)*

**Economic Impact of \$823,000 X 2.5 (lowest index factor) = \$2,057,500 added to this community each year because the arts groups above exist.**

Each workshop above is a cost of \$2500 minimum which pays for travel, accommodation, advertising, fees and supplies and sometimes venue rental. Some of the recovery comes from registrations of participants however the costs cannot be borne solely but registrants.

## HOW IS CITY MONEY USED BY GROUPS?

**PAGS:** Exhibition costs

**FSJ Irish Dance:** Workshop with visiting professional

**SD #60 Band:** Retreat at Taylor for beginning band. Older students attend to assist beginners.

**Northern Dance:** Partial wksp with visiting professional to help students prepare for RAD exams.

**Film Society:** Help with cost of venue rental

**NP Spinners & Weavers:** Venue rental, workshop with visiting expert

**PRN Festival:** Venue rental at NPCC for 2 of 8 days of festival

**Stage North:** Currently receives sponsorship directly from City—no CAC funds allowed

**Potters' Guild:** Partial wksp with visiting instructor which costs \$2500 in full.

**NP Music Teachers:** For piano tuning and venue rental for recitals.

**Move Dance Centre Society:** Wksp in dance techniques and assist with competition fees.

**Peace River Zone Festival:** Partial cost of printing programs or partial expense of adjudicator.

**NP Gymnastics Assn:** Supplies for pre-school classes.

**Slainte Society of Irish Dance:** Partial competition entry fees which are over \$4000.

**FSJ Women's Resource Centre:** Staging Vagina Monologues

**Central PAC:** Partial purchase clay for the Pottery classes at the school which are over \$3500

**FSJ Literacy Society:** Partial purchase supplies for Adult Literacy program, C.H.O.O.S.E. Success, ESL.

### **How is FSJ Arts Connected to the outside world?**

Arts Council Groups are associated with regional, provincial and national organizations: Assembly of BC Arts Councils, Peace Liard Regional Arts Council, Federation of Canadian Artists, Peace Country Spinners and Weavers, Theatre BC, Performing Arts BC, Toronto Film Association, BC Museums Association, BC Touring Council, National Music Association, Potter's Guild of BC, North American Irish Dance Assn, the Western Canadian Irish Dance Assn, and Coimisiun le Rinci Gaelacha (World Irish Dance Commission).

**How is the Arts Council funding an annual budget of \$109,000?** *(not including \$15,000 for groups/\$7,700 for taxes and snow and ice because the city supplies these funds.*

**11% Provincial Basic Assistance Gran    08% City for FSJ**  
**.004% Peace Liard Regional Arts Council    79% Fundraising and sponsorships**

**PROBLEM with this picture:** The Arts Council cannot sustain 79% self-generated funds as a non-profit charitable association without receiving some assistance with money for administration. The Arts Council is spending its time fundraising for survival and not initiating and establishing projects and programs for arts and cultural enhancement within the community. The Arts Council cannot take advantage of any new grants or initiatives that are announced by the province or elsewhere since they have no time and no other funds to match or begin new programs that could benefit the community.

## **TALKING POINTS**

### **Intrinsic Value**

- Governments around the world invest money in this area because the arts represent cultural diversity, education, thoughtfulness, creativity, enrichment, dialogue, cross-cultural exchange and debate, all of which are intrinsic public goods for a civilized society.
- Arts and culture allows a society to express its spirit, allowing us to know one another better, reflecting ourselves to others and the world.

### **Instrumental Value (Economic & Social)**

- Public investment in the arts is the “R&D” of cultural spending. When operating properly, this allows artists and their organizations to begin their work and leverage additional private and public support, allowing the work to grow. Event tickets, books, art works and other products made available at accessible prices complete the picture as the audience engages.
- The arts and culture sector represents \$5 billion of BC’s GDP and over 80,000 jobs. It is a significant economic driver connected to the creative economy.
- Thriving arts and cultural centres draw creative workforces and tourists
- Public investment in the arts allows community-based arts organizations to leverage money from other sectors, and also leverages the social capital of thousands of volunteer hours of activity.
- According to the BC government’s own studies, every dollar invested by the province in arts and culture organizations returns between \$1.05 and \$1.36 directly into provincial treasury.
- Public investment in the arts results in healthier, happier, economically competitive, “livable” communities.
- The arts, like education health and social security, are universal goods that ought to be generally available regardless of ability to pay.
- Tough economic times are exactly the times when we should be supporting our communities and investing wisely
- Public investment in the arts supports cultural activities that reflect our diversity.
- Public investment in the arts also supports capacity building in First Nations communities and helps to reclaim and express identity.

### **Institutional Value**

- Public investment keeps cultural institutions, such as symphonies, operas and museums, open. These institutions provide a global face, projecting Canadian values to the world.

## **BC in context**

- BC Provincial governments of every stripe have not made arts and culture a huge priority. This current government did, however, do some very positive things in the first parts of its mandate, including increasing funding and setting up the BC150 Cultural fund. This \$150 million endowment was supposed to provide more stable funding for arts and culture activities. Unfortunately, given the current world economic situation, the return on that investment has been much smaller than expected, and has not been as fruitful for arts and culture organizations. Combined with the additional cuts of the past few years, arts and cultural organizations are in their worst shape in memory in terms of government support.
- Provincial government funding in BC from all sources, even before the 2009/2010 cuts, made up an average of seven per cent of the operating budgets of performing arts organizations. This is the lowest in Canada. The national average is 13 per cent. In Quebec, provincial funding accounts for 26 per cent of a performing arts organization's budget

## **Arts and culture do matter to British Columbians**

- 3.5 million British Columbians attend arts and culture events, including 300,000 schoolchildren who attend non-profit performances and exhibitions annually.
- When the world turned its eyes to British Columbia at the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games, our artists stood with our athletes to put Canada's heart on its sleeve. The Cultural Olympiad showed all British Columbians the priceless value of investment in our own talent.

## **The Cultural Sector Helps Small Business**

- When artists take the stage, they put British Columbians to work – be they ticket sellers, dry cleaners, caterers, printers, waiters and waitresses, lighting suppliers, ushers, stage hands, sound engineers, taxi drivers, parking attendants, delivery drivers, florists, hair dressers, or babysitters. This buzz of economic activity not only keeps British Columbians employed, *it generates sufficient tax revenue to cover taxpayer investment in the arts*, with more left over for schools and hospitals.
- Small business is the backbone of British Columbia's economy, and the arts sector is proud to support and partner with small businesses in communities across our province.
- Arts organizations *are* small business. Publishers, filmmakers, recording artists, new media firms, and other cultural industries ensure that Canadian and BC artists are known throughout the world.