

Culture Builds Community!

Engage

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2
JANUARY 2011

What's Inside:

Every community
has a story

Culture Days 2010

Artists provide spark
in community

And more!

Sask **Culture**

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Culture Builds Community!
Engage

VOL. 1, ISSUE 2, JANUARY 2011

Engage is a new publication, published by SaskCulture Inc. It is designed to highlight the work of cultural leaders, volunteers and the diversity of activities supported by the Culture Section of Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation.



Table of Contents

President's Message	3
Every Community has a Story	4
Heritage Valued in the Heart of Humboldt	6
Celebrating Culture in Kindersley	7
Common Weal Continues to Connect Communities and the Arts	8
Uncovering the Cultural Drivers for Saskatoon's Cultural Plan	10
Yorkton Aims for Cultural Excellence	11
Culture Days... Helping Communities Celebrate Culture	12
Remembering James Brady	15
Artists Provide Spark for Vibrant Communities	17
Cultural Leaders	20
Tapping into the Northern Spirits	22
Creative Kids Attracting Interest	23



Cover Photo:
Middle eastern dancers offer dance instruction at CBC Culturefête

PHOTO BY SHAUNNA GRANDISH

Direct Inquires to:

Diane Ell, Editor
404, 2125 11th Avenue
Regina SK S4P 3X3
Tel: (306) 780.9453
Email: dell@saskculture.sk.ca
www.saskculture.sk.ca

Graphic Design:

Jo Anne Lauder
Email: jlauder@accesscomm.ca

Contributing Writers:

Damon Badger Heit, Shaunna Grandish,
Mei Shan Wan, Kevin Kitchen and Aidan Morgan

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Welcome to the
second issue of
Engage!

We are pleased to provide you with another issue of SaskCulture's new publication, Engage. In this issue, we are focusing on the important role that culture and cultural activity have in many communities throughout Saskatchewan. Whether it involved starting a new cultural program, hiring an artist in the community, refurbishing a heritage site, or celebrating Culture Days, many Saskatchewan communities have recognized how culture can add vibrancy to their neighborhoods and build their communities.

SaskCulture is pleased to be launching a brand new funding program that will support municipalities that wish to pursue cultural development. The Municipal Cultural Engagement and Planning Fund will help municipalities undertaking cultural engagement and planning initiatives.

While there are many examples of municipal cultural engagement we would love to share with readers, we hope you enjoy seeing some of the ways Saskatchewan communities have embraced aspects of their authentic culture and used it to create a unique sense of place and increase quality of life in their communities.

Respectfully yours,

Reginald Newkirk
SaskCulture President



New funding program for municipalities

SaskCulture is launching a new funding program, the **Municipal Cultural Engagement and Planning Grant**, to support municipalities undertaking cultural engagement and planning initiatives.

Municipalities can apply for funding to assist them with cultural planning projects that explore and plan for the creative and cultural potential of a community. Project ideas include: inventory of cultural assets, facilitated community consultations on culture, municipal cultural planning or cultural mapping.

"The link between municipal cultural planning and community economic prosperity is what drives large and small communities in Canada towards a new economic model." Gord Hume

"Municipal cultural planning is fundamentally about integrating culture effectively across all facets of municipal planning and decision making."
Dr. Greg Backer

Applications for the **Municipal Cultural Engagement and Planning Grant** are available online at www.saskculture.sk.ca

Application deadline: **April 15, 2011**

Interested municipalities can contact:

Dennis Garreck
Community Outreach &
Development Coordinator
SaskCulture Inc
(306) 780-9265
or toll-free: 1-866-476-6830
dgarreck@saskculture.sk.ca





PHOTOS COURTESY DENNIS GARRECK

Sculpture in front of Shurniak Art Gallery in Assiniboia, SK

Every Community has a Story

Every community, large and small, has a story and cultural assets that help set it apart from those around it. For the past several years, urban and rural planners have continued to explore how a community's cultural assets can be used to build economic opportunity, enhance quality of life for residents, increase civic participation and ignite community pride and vibrancy.

Gord Hume, author and chair of the Ontario Municipal Cultural Planning Partnership, points out that in their quest to stand out, or even survive, some municipalities have realized they must offer more than just infrastructure, they must consider how they can influence quality of life. According to Hume, "cultural planning is about harnessing the assets of a community; celebrating the unique resources, such as heritage properties, natural assets and community spirit; revitalizing downtown cores that too often have deteriorated; honouring and respecting the unique contributions of our artists and artisans; creating diverse and safe neighborhoods; raising the bar for urban design; protecting our green spaces and becoming better stewards of our environment; and the many other elements that make up a community moving forward confidently in the 21st century."

In his article on *Building a Creative Rural*

Economy, Dr. Greg Baeker points out how municipalities large and small are turning to municipal cultural planning as a tool for building local economic through creativity, culture and quality of place.

Organizations such as the Creative Cities Network in Canada, which was established as a non-profit in 2002, brought municipal leaders from across the country together to develop processes and guidelines, and share best practices around cultural planning. Community leaders are encouraged to assess their tangible and intangible assets, opportunities for cultural engagement; media and underlying policy and support programs. Thanks to support from the Olympic Legacies Fund, the organizations partnered in creating community resources that can be accessed through the Creative Cities Network web site: www.creativecities.ca.

Another popular concept that emerged from municipal cultural planning was "place-making", which is often used when referring to the process of transforming a physical space into a place that is culturally meaningful. "Place-making" can be seen in the development of urban areas referred to as "China Town" or "Little Italy", or to areas that have used their heritage to develop campaigns or community taglines, such as "*Montmartre: Paris of the Prairies*" or "*Duck Lake: Canadian History in Harmony*".

Cultural performance matters

The competitive advantage of provinces is directly related to the performance of its cities, not just economically, but socially and culturally. While cities have an important role, all communities, both urban and rural, contribute with innovation, economic development, as well as social and political interaction. Leading cultural policy research Neil Bradford narrows it down to five principles:

- **Place matters.**
Cities and communities are the places where the challenges critical to Canada's future - economic growth, social inclusion, cultural diversity, ecological sustainability - are being played out.
- **Collaboration is vital.**
No one actor has the capacity to deliver inclusive, innovative and sustainable cities.
- **Ideas come from the "ground up."**
Communities must be involved fully in developing solutions.
- **Every city and community is unique.**
Governments must be flexible in adapting to the assets, challenges and opportunities of different places from the big city-regions to the smaller communities.
- **Cities, suburbs, and rural areas are inextricably linked.**
Metropolitan spaces need integrated, region-wide approaches.

Excerpted from Creative Cities: "*Structured Policy Dialogue Report*" by Neil Bradford, Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc., August 2004.



ABOVE: Vatnabyggd sculpture in Elfros by Hans Holtkamp.

RIGHT, TOP: Mural in Melville created by local art class.

RIGHT, CENTRE: Multi-faith site near Craik, SK.

RIGHT, BOTTOM: Quilting room in Melville Culture Centre.

PHOTOS COURTESY DENNIS GARRECK

HERITAGE VALUED IN THE HEART OF

Humboldt

By Mei Shan Wan

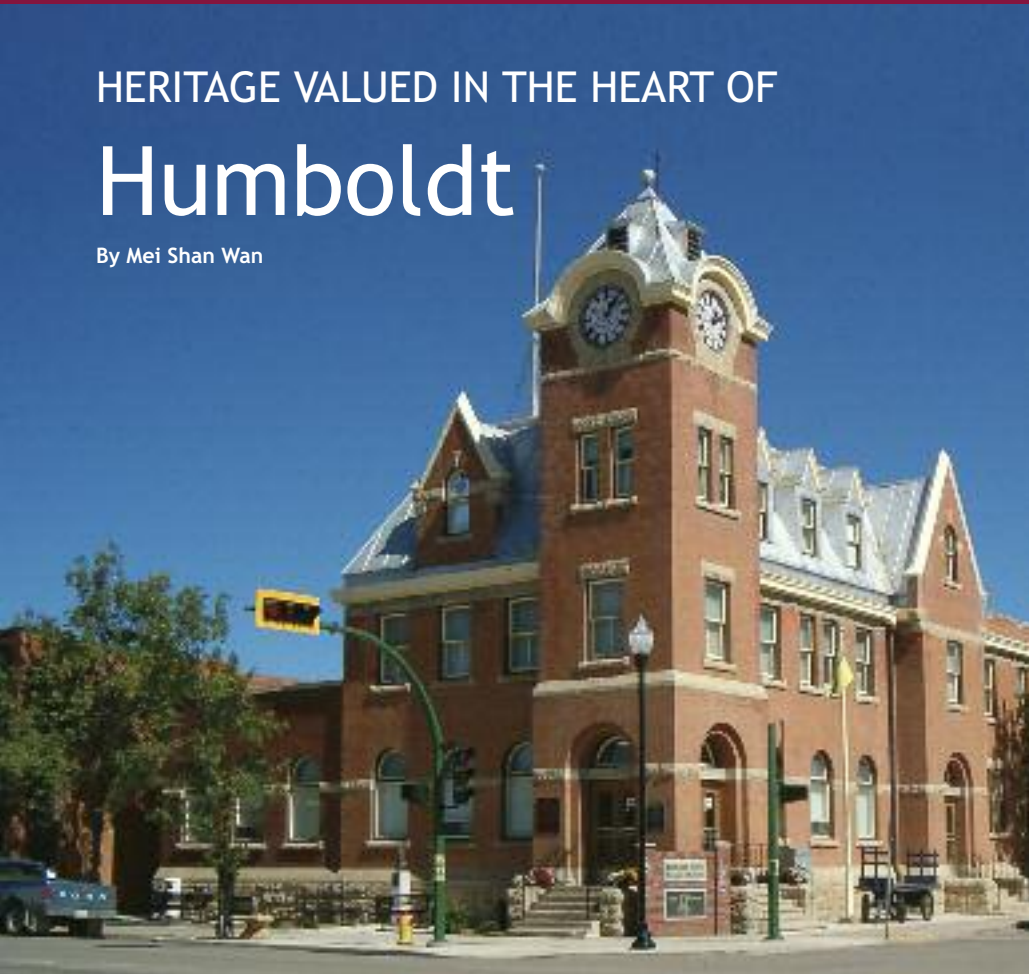


PHOTO COURTESY HUMBOLT AND DISTRICT MUSEUM

The project also discovered that the citizens of Humboldt value the prominent role of faith in the community's history, the role of sports and arts, the history of experiencing prosperity and sustainable growth, and the investment in green spaces and natural environment. It has also identified Humboldt as a community with a strong sense of identity and connectedness with a tradition of being community-focused.

"The second guiding factor was about the museum becoming increasingly relevant in the community as something that lives with us and is something that we actively engage during decision making," said Hoegson. As the project progressed, participants identified resources within the community that embodied the 12 heritage themes. These included both tangible and intangible resources such as: historic buildings, stories, works of arts, collections of artifacts, parks, social spaces, gardens, areas of the city, and music festivals.

The development of the Heritage Project began after the Humboldt City Council

Created in 2008, Humboldt's Heritage Project is the first of its kind in Saskatchewan. Organized by the Humboldt and District Museum and Gallery, the project gathered community input about its heritage and developed 12 heritage themes that reflect the life of the Humboldt community.

"It isn't just a question of what we're going to preserve from the past...our decisions impact the future," said Pat Fiori, project facilitator of the Humboldt Heritage Project. The community's heritage values focus, on not only the historical aspect, but also reflect cultural, artistic, natural, social, and spiritual values. They represent the community's expressions of cultural norms.

Citizens were engaged in discussing what they value about their heritage and culture. They discussed what was important to themselves and future generations. The project strives to preserve and protect their identified values.

According to the Museum's Curator Jennifer Hoegson, "There were two guiding factors with this project. Firstly, it was about community engagement, mak-

"It isn't just a question of what we're going to preserve from the past... our decisions impact the future."

ing sure the community had the opportunity to participate, and letting them have a voice."

The project revealed that citizens felt it was important to focus on building a healthy community. The town felt that places for socialization created a place of belonging.

asked the museum to develop a heritage policy as part of the municipality's development of a new official community plan. The project received funding from SaskCulture's Capacity Building Grant. Moving forward, the town will be looking at developing a Heritage Management Plan.



Community participation in developing heritage values.



PHOTO COURTESY TOWN OF KINDERSLEY

Youth engagement in cultural activity contributes to Kindersley's vibrant community life.

Kindersley also hosted its first ever film festival in 2010. According to Gibson, the three-day event was a success and will likely become an annual event.

Kindersley also participated in the first-ever Culture Days in Saskatchewan, held in September 2010. The celebration included a number of exciting events celebrating the community's heritage, culture, and diversity. "A Taste of Ethnic Cuisine, which showcased food prepared by Kindersley's new international residents, was extremely well-received," said Gibson. The event attracted approximately 150 people in just less than one hour to sample food from across the globe.

Kindersley also showed their support of Culture Days by bringing back their heritage walking tours, as well as staging a one-night mini film festival. The festivities concluded with the Kindersley Culture Crawl during which visual and performing artists were dispersed throughout the community to perform and showcase their work.

For 2011, Gibson said he wants to build on the success achieved in 2010, which includes bolstering the promotion of "Culture Kindersley," increasing Culture Days celebrations, and seeing the expansion of the international resident programming.

"I think the overall theme of growth and progress throughout Kindersley's history is evident in the cultural ideas being developed," he says. "We continue to look to the future with a focus on the best interests of our community, just as Kindersley's first pioneers did 100 years ago."

He adds that "A healthy and vibrant community is one that embraces all aspects of life and brings people with common interests together to share them."

To find out more about arts and culture in Kindersley, please visit: www.kindersley.ca.

Celebrating Culture in Kindersley

By Shaunna Grandish

Kindersley is taking the lead when it comes to showing off their culture. The town of about 4,400 residents is home to a diverse and talented group of performers, arts and culture supporters, and educators who are actively producing, promoting, and engaging in culture.

"Kindersley is and has always been known for its progressive, youthful, and energetic residents," says Wayne Gibson, culture and youth coordinator, Town of Kindersley. "While strong support for sports and recreation has always been evident, the very active arts and culture community has often received a less prominent spotlight."

In 2009, Kindersley's town council completed its five-year strategic plan, which included a priority to promote and maintain an "active and vibrant arts, culture, and heritage sector" in an effort to highlight the importance of arts and culture to the health and vitality of a community. To help the community achieve this goal, town council established the Arts, Culture, and Heritage Advisory Committee and hired Gibson in the new position of Culture and Youth Coordinator for the

purposes of promoting arts, culture, and youth engagement in Kindersley.

Over the past year, major accomplishments were achieved in bringing arts and culture to the forefront of resident's minds. A logo and brand - "Culture Kindersley" - representing the Arts, Culture, and Heritage Advisory Committee was created to help promote cultural organizations and events; a full-coloured glossy brochure promoting area events was printed; and member cultural organizations were allotted space on the town's newly enhanced official website.

With help from these new initiatives, 2010 turned out to be a busy and productive year for Kindersley's arts and culture scene.

Unique events, coinciding with Kindersley's 100th birthday, were held around the community. In July, the Town hosted a guided Heritage Walking Tour of the community led by youth dressed in period costume. The historical journey through the town's downtown has since been published into a book so that others can enjoy self-guided tours.

In partnership with a local film company,



Gordon Keewatin helps youth discover their artistic abilities.

COMMON WEAL CONTINUES TO Connect Communities and the Arts

Every community has a challenge to face. Through its work, Common Weal has shown how arts and culture can be used to help nurture positive change in communities and help them face their adversity.

The inner-city seems to be constantly challenged with the hard issues of gangs, violence, drug abuse and crime. Common Weal has shown how arts and culture could be used as a means of intervention by establishing an Aboriginal Cultural Mentorship Program in north-central Regina.

Saskatchewan artist Gordon Keewatin was brought on to help bring traditional and contemporary arts and cultural practices to youth in Regina's inner-city neighbourhood. "By encouraging children in their artistic abilities," Keewatin explains, "they discover the truth that

they are individually gifted and can use their gifts to express their own viewpoints and contribute in a positive way to the world around them." Keewatin worked as Artist-in-Residence in the North Central Regina from 2008-2009, thanks to funding from the Aboriginal Arts and Culture Leadership Grant, supported by Saskatchewan Lotteries.

While not always community-specific, the projects coordinated by Common Weal continue to blend the arts with different community issues, such as the lives of new immigrants or those living with disabilities.

In 2010, Common Weal in partnership with Regina Open Door Society gave children of immigrants living in Regina the chance to express themselves through photography in *Through their Eyes: Photographs by Immigrant and Refugee Youth*. Artistic

Director Gerry Ruecker explains that expressive arts, such as photography, have historically had a key role in civic engagement. "These youth often face serious challenges in the areas of identity, language, education, and employment," he says. "By introducing them to methods to help them express themselves, they can release some of the stories and images they have within them, as well as forge a common bond with each other." The exhibition, funded by the Government of Saskatchewan was exhibited in the foyer of the West Harvard Tower last August and was on display for Culture Days at the CBC Building in Regina.

As well, Common Weal was able to partner with the South Saskatchewan Independent Living Centre to provide an opportunity for those living with disabilities to express their unique culture. Saskatchewan artist Traci Foster was



PHOTOS COURTESY COMMON WEAL



LEFT: Newcomers use photography to express their ideas on life in Saskatchewan.

ABOVE: *Through Their Eyes* was exhibited in downtown Regina and at CBC Culturefête.

“[They] can use their own gifts to express their own viewpoints and contribute in a positive way to the world around them.”

- Gordon Keewatin

hired as an artist in residence to offer programming that was accessible and adapted to suit a range of individuals, from quadriplegic wheelchair users with limited fine and gross motor skills, to individuals with psychiatric disabilities who are impacted by social anxiety and mood disorders, to people with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD) and cognitive or developmental disorders. “At this time,” explains Joanne Shannon, executive director, Common Weal, “there is no other programming available which specifically addresses disability culture and recognizes the need for social accessibility.”

The seeds of the organization known as Common Weal Community Arts Inc. were planted back in 1992, when artists and residents of Fort Qu’Appelle worked together on a community play based on the oral history of the area. The play helped deal with issues of colonialism and racism and fostered relationships among different cultural groups.

In May of 2010, the organization hosted a three-day conference, “*Connect: Towards a Socially Engaged Aesthetic*” to explore

how to engage communities and the public. “The conference really built on our vision of exploring the role of commu-

nity-driven art in promoting social change,” said Shannon. The conference raised the profile of the organization as a leader in community-engaged arts in Canada, as well as featuring performances by Saskatchewan artists, including The Project and Rouge Gorge. The conference received funding from the Capacity Building Grant offered through SaskCulture.

Build Your Capacity!

New and existing cultural organizations looking to support activities that build their capacity or partnerships with others are invited to check out the Capacity Building Grant Program (CBG).

Annual deadlines: May 15, October 15

Visit www.saskculture.sk.ca or call (306) 780-9284/
Toll-free: 1-866-476-6830 for more information.

UNCOVERING THE CULTURAL DRIVERS FOR

Saskatoon's Culture Plan



PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF SASKATOON

In 2008, *The Founders* became part of Saskatoon's public art collection.

Known for its river, its heritage and its vibrant arts and culture scene, Saskatoon jumped on the opportunity to incorporate its unique culture into a range of different priorities including urban design, youth engagement, recreation programming, economic development, as well as neighbourhood and downtown revitalization.

Recognized as a Culture Capital in 2006, Saskatoon took advantage of this opportunity to increase interest in municipal cultural planning. The increased exposure of Saskatoon's cultural assets helped to shift the focus from emphasizing the cost of culture to an approach that recognizes the value of culture investment. By the end of 2010, the City of Saskatoon was well on its way to completing its first-ever Municipal Culture Plan.

According to Kevin Kitchen, Community Initiatives Manager, City of Saskatoon, "The purpose of the Municipal Culture

"We value the diversity of culture that provides opportunities for shared experiences across age groups, gender and ethnic backgrounds."

Plan is to establish a shared vision for culture in Saskatoon and to provide a set of guiding principles, strategic directions, objectives and specific actions for implementation over the next five years to ensure Saskatoon reaches its greatest potential as a culturally vibrant and creative city."

For Saskatoon, the timing of the culture plan has coincided with a broader community visioning initiative, known as the Saskatoon Speaks. "This initiative has provided for a unique opportunity to not only link," says Kitchen, "but to embed culture into broader community values and aspi-

rations for the city as it grows to a population of 500,000 over the next 50 years."

The development of Saskatoon's municipal cultural plan is being led by City of Saskatoon staff, under the direction of the Community Development Branch, and in collaboration with community arts and cultural stakeholders and Saskatoon residents. In late 2009, the City established the Office for Urbanism (now known as Dialog), led by Jennifer Keesmaat to facilitate the process. Cultural planning experts Dr. Greg Baeker of AuthenticCity and Marian Donnelly of Inner Circle Management have also been instrumental in the process.

Community participation has been key to the development to date. Through stakeholder interviews, a Cultural Planning Forum in March of 2010 and a Culture Plan Open House, held in December, the general public and cultural stakeholders have had an influential impact on the planning work.

Saskatoon's draft Municipal Culture Plan will be available for public review and comment at the Saskatoon Speaks: Listening to You City Summit, scheduled for winter 2011. The final Culture Plan will be presented to City Council for approval in the spring of 2011.

For more information on the Saskatoon Culture Plan please visit the City's website at www.saskatoon.ca (see "C" for Culture Plan).

Article prepared in cooperation with Kevin Kitchen, Community Initiatives Manager, City of Saskatoon.



PHOTOS COURTESY DENNIS GARRECK

munity facility for cultural activities, events and organizations that is accessible, affordable, and sustainable.

The steering committee will be responsible for ensuring that these objectives are met and will establish measurements by which the success of this plan can be monitored and evaluated.

Yorkton received funding support from SaskCulture to begin its cultural planning.

For a copy of the Municipal Cultural Plan, visit www.yorkton.ca.

LEFT: Architecture of old Hudson's Bay building in Yorkton is an example of cultural heritage.

BELOW: Doorways to opportunity sculpture in Yorkton by Lionel Peyachew.

Mural and public art in Yorkton, SK.



YORKTON AIMS FOR Cultural Excellence

By Mei Shan Wan

Yorkton was one of the first Saskatchewan communities to develop a cultural plan. Organizers saw its development as an opportunity to achieve greater community engagement in the development of Yorkton's cultural sector and its contribution to the city's quality of life.

Approved in 2009, the Municipal Cultural Plan will help guide the community's development into a centre of cultural excellence. In the months ahead, the City will be recruiting participants to form a steering committee in 2011 to plan the next steps of the development process.

Plans include: Increasing communication between cultural organizations and events to improve coordination; Adopting a municipal cultural policy; Increasing awareness through a strategic communication and marketing strategy; Increasing volunteer support through recruitment/retention/reward programs; Building

recognition of Yorkton as a Cultural Hub - a centre of cultural excellence and activities while offering programming that appeals to all communities within a significant radius outside of Yorkton; and establishing a new or refurbished com-





Storyteller Kevin MacKenzie entertains families with stories during CBC Culture Fête.

Culture Days... Helping Communities Celebrate Culture

This past year, Saskatchewan participated in the first-ever Culture Days celebration that highlighted free, interactive cultural activities from across the country taking place on September 24-26, 2010. The province extended the celebration to an entire Culture Week, and had over 130 activities, from 23

separate communities, registered into the national Culture Days database.

Saskatchewan communities celebrated in many different ways, from holding artist studio or backstage tours, to offering belly-dancing, mural-making, to multi-cultural performances and more. During the Culture Days and Culture Week,



PHOTO BY SHAWN BAUCHE

PHOTO COURTESY TOWN OF KINDERSLEY

Youth play music during Culture Days in Kindersley.

Highlighting cultural attractions and artists

Culture Days provides a great opportunity to showcase your community and build civic pride. Both Kindersley and Weyburn proclaimed Culture Days in September 2010 and used the opportunity to encourage the communities to celebrate their cultural assets. Kindersley held a Culture Crawl, heritage walking tour, arts walk, film festival encored, as well as goose plucking and potato peeling during its 38th annual Goose Festival. Weyburn invited residents to an event in the park, where it paid tribute to the work of local artist Mildred Coghill and featured the work of many other local talents. The City of Saskatoon, which also proclaimed Culture Days, helped build a partnership among several different organizations in the city to showcase the range of cultural opportunities available.

Time to get ready for

culture Fête
days de la **culture**



September 30 - October 2, 2011

For more information visit www.culturedays.ca



residents had the opportunity to twist wire into words, recited poetry, tried their hand at calligraphy, explored archives, learned some new dance moves, and even maneuvered wheel-chairs across a painted canvas.

Saskatchewan artist Laura Hale got a first hand look at cultural activity in communities through her travels throughout the province as Culture Days Animateur. "Personal visits and travelling to communities in the province is a great way to engage people and spark ideas," said Hale, who took the time to speak

"I was able to gather hundreds of different words, engage people in conversations about culture in their area, ideas for local Culture Days activities, and how they could get their community involved and feel part of the bigger picture of Culture Days." - Laura Hale, Cultural Animateur



with community leaders about what was unique in their community and could be used to plan a Culture Days activity.

Travelling in a Culture Days-decaled van, Hale covered 4,000 km in 30 days, driving a circuit through Gravelbourg, Moose Jaw, Estevan, Lumsden, Regina, Prince Albert, Meadow Lake, Battlefords, Lloydminster, and Saskatoon. At each location she provided opportunities for people to express their thoughts about arts and culture by shaping coloured wire into words.

"Through this experience," she says, "I was able to gather hundreds of different words, engage people in conversations about culture in their area, ideas for local Culture Days activities, and how they could get their community involved and feel part of the bigger picture of Culture Days."

In its first year, Culture Days sprang up right across Canada. In total over 4,500 cultural activities were held in over 700 Canadian cities and towns and the opportunity to engage in free, interactive cultural activities caught people's attention.

LEFT: Irene Oakes performs fancy dance during Culture Days.



PHOTO COURTESY FLIN FLON ARTS COUNCIL

Communities working together to showcase culture

One of the most successful Culture Days partnerships took place in the north. Organized by the Flin Flon Arts Council, the communities of Flin Flon, MB and Creighton and Denare Beach, SK worked to create a weekend of cultural activities. Over 5,000 residents, including a few tourists, participated in events in these communities, whose combined population is not much higher. Activities over the weekend included artist studio tours with artist talks, film-making workshops, mask-making, multicultural showcases, quilt-making demonstrations, interactive Aboriginal displays, writing groups, youth theatre experiences, school programming and more.

More than one third of people participating in Culture Days activities brought children with them to the activities.



To see the Show Us Your Culture online photo gallery visit www.saskculture.sk.ca

From a national survey of all participating provinces, 30% of Canadians reported that they had heard of Culture Days, with Winnipeg and Regina having the highest per capita scores 50% and 44% respectively.

Over two-thirds of the respondents noted that Culture Days raised their awareness of the range and quality of arts and cultural activities in the community and how artist and arts organizations make positive contributions to the community (more than two-thirds agreed). They also said they were inspired to attend more locally-based events in the future (7 out of 10). For those who did not attend, scheduling conflicts or limited time were the main reasons cited. Two-thirds said they were "somewhat likely", and one quarter said they were "very likely" to attend next year.

LEFT: Weyburn artisan, Loretta Knibbs doing a Buggy Wheel Rug demonstration during Culture Days.

Kicking it off with Culturefête

If people wanted to get interactive and try cultural activities, the CBC Culturefête in Regina was the place to be. Over 800 participants dropped by to try different opportunities including origami, wire words, henna tattoos, face-painting, storytelling, photography, map-building, poetry-writing and more. The festive atmosphere was supported by lively performances from a variety of local multicultural musicians. A first-ever event for Regina, Culturefête proved to be a great example of partnership and culture.

During Culturefête, SaskCulture took the opportunity to capture photos of people and their thoughts about culture in Saskatchewan. Visit Show Us Your Culture at www.saskculture.ca



PHOTO COURTESY LAURA HALE

PHOTO COURTESY AIDAN MORGAN



More than two-thirds of people who participated in Culture Days activities report that Culture Days raised awareness of the range and quality of arts and cultural activities in their community.



PHOTO COURTESY RON WOYTOWICH, KIKINAHK FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

Remembering James Brady

By Damon Badger Heit



Brady, a veteran of WWII, educated and mobilized Métis communities on the rights of squatters on Crown lands and the establishment of Métis political groups that sought political and cultural protection for Métis peoples.

Métis activist James Patrick Brady, commonly known as Jim Brady, was a recognized leader in the Métis community. He, along with friend Absolum Halkett, went missing during a prospecting trip in northern Saskatchewan in 1967 and was never seen or heard from again. Although nothing was ever proven, the incident sparked controversial speculations that he was assassinated for his political activities.

Forty-three years later, a stone memorial dedicated to the memory and contribu-

tions made by Jim Brady to the Métis community and Saskatchewan's heritage was unveiled in front of the Kikinahk Friendship Centre in La Ronge during Jim Brady Days on July 10, 2011. The memorial was funded through SaskCulture's Métis Cultural Development Fund.

Brady is widely acknowledged in the Métis community as one of the most influential political figures of the 20th

century, but to the broader public, he is generally unknown. Some of Brady's accomplishments are enshrined in the formation of the Métis Association of Alberta, the Métis Association of Saskatchewan and the Métis Association of La Ronge, now known as the Jim Brady Métis Local.

Those close to him recall him as a self-educated "socialist Marxist" who was not only fluent in Cree, Michif, English and

ABOVE: Brady's extended family and friends are pleased to honour his life and contributions.



PHOTO COURTESY MARION OTTER

Original monument to James Brady near La Ronge.

French, but also had some ability in German, Spanish and Latin. Brady, a veteran of WWII, educated and mobilized Métis communities on the rights of squatters on Crown lands and the establishment of Métis political groups that sought political and cultural protection for Métis peoples.

While his home by *Mistasini* is long gone, an original monument to him still remains in the area. Although defaced - its orig-

inal plaque and bust gone missing, and weathered by time - the old monument, along with the new one in La Ronge, help continue the memory of this cultural leader, as well as the resiliency of the Métis peoples of the region and through-

out Saskatchewan and Alberta.

SaskCulture, works in partnership with the Gabriel Dumont Institute, to offer the Métis Cultural Development Fund, aimed at preserving and passing on Métis culture and tradition in Saskatchewan.

Métis Cultural Development Fund

Offered in partnership with Gabriel Dumont Institute, the Métis Cultural Development Fund (MCDF) is aimed at supporting activity that helps preserve and pass on Métis culture and traditions.

Annual deadlines: May 15, October 15

For more information, visit www.saskculture.sk.ca, or call Damon Badger Heit at (306) 780-9251 or email: dbadgerheit@saskculture.sk.ca.



Saskatchewan Lotteries is the fundraiser for over 12,000 sport, culture and recreation groups. These groups provide opportunities for people to participate in activities in every Saskatchewan community. Get involved today!

Learn more at www.sasklotteries.ca



ARTISTS PROVIDE SPARK FOR Vibrant Communities

By Michael Berry and Diane Ell



PHOTO COURTESY MICHAEL BERRY

“There’s an enhanced perception of the hospital as a more caring environment when we fill it with arts and creativity.”

- Bonnie Chapman, Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region

Individuals and communities have an interesting dynamic; it’s hard to think of one without the other and decide who builds whom. Since 1968, the idea of hosting an artist in a community, has

illustrated how art and inspiration can not only help energize individuals, but contribute to building vibrant communities.

Formerly known as the Artist-in-residence

program, the Partnerships Innovations Program, along with the Explorations Program, is a key part of the Creative Partnerships Program, administered by the Saskatchewan Arts Board, with funding from Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund.

“Since its inception, hundreds of communities and organizations in Saskatchewan have appreciated the impact of this program,” explains Michelle Rae McKay, Program Consultant - Indigenous and Community Arts, Saskatchewan Arts Board. Traditionally, the residency was hosted by communities and schools, but more recently new partnerships have emerged with different businesses, such as the Mosaic Potash Mine in Esterhazy, the Canadian Light Source Synchrotron in Saskatoon, Sâkêwêwak Artists Collective, as well as Ranch Ehrlo Society and the Pasqua Hospital in Regina.

Over the years, the program has come to illustrate many great qualities. Bonnie Chapman, current artist-in-residence for the Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region, says it’s empowering and helps patients and staff deal with pain and stress.

Alejandro Romero, who worked as artist-in-residence at King George Community School in Saskatoon from 2008-2009, says it changes people’s lives and brings communities closer together. Communities such as Gravelbourg, Last Mountain Lake and North Battleford have appreciated the legacies left by artists such as theatre revitalization, cultural facilities and lasting mentorships in the community.

“The program is always changing”, says McKay, “yet the focus on creating a meaningful relationship between an artist and a community or organizations is essential to its success.”

There are still new opportunities to be uncovered. “That is why the Partnership Explorations Program was added in 2008,” explains McKay, “to enable applicants to undertake some research before determining the type of artist partnership might be required.” Those interested in the Creative Partnerships Program are encouraged to contact McKay directly to talk about the program.

Art for Health

Those that spend their days focusing on their own health or the health issues of

others often need distractions. The opportunity to be creative adds a new dimension and is considered by many to be therapeutic. Bonnie Chapman uses art to awaken an “encouraging and optimistic spirit” that better promotes healing and welfare in health care facilities.

“Hospitals need to have colour and warmth to take sterility away,” Chapman says, “it seems more nurturing for patients and staff.”

Chapman began as an artist-in-residence in the Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region in 2004 as a part of an Art at Work program initiated by Saskatchewan Arts Board. Her program proved so successful with patients and staff members that the Health Region began funding the program on a permanent basis. Today, she runs her own studio at Pasqua Hospital in Regina and considers it an open space where people can come, engage in art projects and, most importantly, be creative.

What Chapman discovered through her work is that it’s not so much her making connections, but patients, staff and families reaching deeper into themselves, helping to ease their own anxieties. She says the process of art-making takes people deeper into their self-consciousness, providing them with greater insight and self-knowledge of their mind, body and spirit. Chapman believes this ultimately helps them gain a “sense of participation” in their own health.

According to one patient who was undergoing cancer treatment at Pasqua Hospital, being creative helps put her in the moment, easing pain and stress. “I came the first time and I got hooked, she says. “I find it very relaxing when I concentrate on what I’m doing and I’m not thinking about any problems or anything else.”

Looking at Art with New Eyes

If there is one word to describe Alejandro Romero, during his residency at King George Community School in Prince Albert, it would be facilitarian. Artists are architects of beauty, he says, but what motivates him is not the hope of becoming internationally recognized, but empowering and assisting others in developing their own creative spirit.

“What moves me is that I facilitate,” he says. “Art is not an isolated matter; it’s a part of life. We communicate with our



PHOTO COURTESY ALEJANDRO ROMERO

“I facilitate people to be themselves and give them permission to create. I believe that’s my strength as an artist.”

- Alejandro Romero, artist

work, express what is happening inside and outside of us. People react to it.”

The King George Community School, created in 1911, is located in a neighbourhood with the same name and is considered a diverse but impoverished community. As such it is plagued with misunderstanding, feelings of isolation, and deficient in inspiration. But Romero, who came from a similar background himself, sees art as an immeasurable remedy for such social ills.

“We are doctors of the soul and we don’t get paid for that, and that’s part of the imbalance of society,” he says of being an artist. “I thought that if I ever practice art I also wanted to work with communities and use art. I want to make them think of art as a life form, about what it means. I want people to lead and take risks. It’s living in the now, the present.”

As an artist-in-residence, Romero saw his role to provide avenues that enabled people to realize the artist within themselves. He wanted to establish a dialogue that helped uncover common ground bringing the community closer together.

Through his residency he had people use recycled materials to create yard sculptures, form artists groups, hold community art shows and organize a mural project outside a hockey rink.

“The result is a mural where they can say they were involved in the creation and feel a sense of pride and accomplishment,” he says. “This [Art] is a great resource for you to talk and express how you feel. I think it was very important for them to hear that and it gives them the opportunity to share that with others, sometimes they can’t have the space to do that.”

Romero has since moved on to be part of the Live Arts Education virtual residency program supported by Saskatchewan Arts Board, Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, SaskCulture/Saskatchewan Lotteries

Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation. His program provides a two-hour broadcast designed to teach students Grades 3-8 about digital photography, composition and his own experience as an artist.

Reaching Youth with the Positive Experience of Art

Lots of people are given a bad lot in life, but they shouldn’t have to endure it forever. There should always be greater opportunities for everyone. Amanda Scandrett, artist-in-residence at the Ranch Ehrlo Society, uses art to reach out to disillusioned youth hoping to show them that there’s more to themselves than they realize.

“In a lot of people you see a lack of self-worth,” says Scandrett. “How can we expect people to make positive choices when they can’t even see them?”

Within her capacity at Ranch Ehrlo, Scandrett says she wants to increase the self-esteem of youth by helping them to reveal talents they never thought they



PHOTO COURTESY ALEJANDRO ROMERO

“I’m an artist that believes in the healing property of art. Art helps you get more grounded and find your place in things.”

- Amanda Scandrett, Artist-in-Residence, Ranch Ehrlo Society, Regina

Scandrett’s residency began as part of the Creative Partnerships Program, but has since been established as a permanent role at Ranch Ehrlo Society. Ranch Ehrlo exists as an independent school system with many facilities around the province. Its mission is to provide greater opportunities and services to assist youth in acquiring skills they otherwise wouldn’t have accessed. They have an approach to education Scandrett says, that very much matches her own.

“I don’t know what it is, but I find the

kids are more willing to express themselves, step outside and try new things which I was surprised with at first,” she says. “I guess that was a preconceived notion that I came here with, that it would be hard to get them to open up. But they’re so willing. It’s really cool to work with them because they just take stuff and go with it.”

Besides working as artist-in-residence at Ranch Ehrlo, Scandrett is also a member of the popular Regina band Library Voices.

possessed. In doing so, she also wants to get to know themselves better and communicate their feelings positively to others; a power, she believes, that art provides, that cognitive skills and verbalizing do not.

“I believe we create our own symbols because we all interpret the world in different ways,” she says. “Art is about expressing who you are and talking about yourself within a community. Personalities shine through right away and you just kind of click.”

Scandrett works with youth, mostly between the ages of 10 to 15 years, on various projects to help free their creative spirit. They’ve worked on creating hip-hop music and designing CD covers - a project also intended to illustrate the differences between graffiti art, popular with hip-hop, and vandalism. They also displayed work created on fabric at the 2008 Regina Folk Festival using their own symbolism to express moments of joy and gratitude.

“The work is this project focused on positive experiences and outlook,” Scandrett says. “The youth relived their own positive experiences as they created visual representations of the experience. They also experienced the benefits of sharing positive aspects of their lives with others and saw how viewers interacted within the positive space they created.”



PHOTO COURTESY CRYSTAL HOWIE

Mural located at the Mosaic Potash Mine in Esterhazy created by Artist in Residence Crystal Howie.

The Partnership Innovations Grant and the Partnerships Explorations Grant are part of the Creative Partnerships initiative supported by Saskatchewan Arts Board and SaskCulture/Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation.

For more information on these programs, contact Michelle Rae McKay at mmckay@artsboard.sk.ca or Dianne Warren at Dianne@artsboard.ca





PHOTO COURTESY MULTICULTURAL COUNCIL OF SASKATCHEWAN



Q & A WITH ANIKA HENDERSON

Cultural Leaders

IN SASKATCHEWAN

What cultural projects are you working on presently or have just completed?

Of the cultural projects I have worked on, my work at the Newcomer Welcome Centre (NWC) is the most exciting and is likely to have the most lasting impact. The NWC opened in September 2008 after we received a start-up grant through the Community Initiatives Fund. The NWC provides settlement and integration services in a safe and welcoming environment to newcomers to Southwest Saskatchewan. Our goal is to act as a gateway to equitable, respectful and welcoming communities where all members are empowered to actively participate and contribute.

Is there a particular accomplishment or contribution to cultural development in Saskatchewan you are most proud of, and why?

I'm most proud of the work done by our team at the NWC to assist new immigrants and to establish a model for settlement and integration service delivery here in Saskatchewan. The NWC in Swift

Current was the first of its kind in the province. It is a very special place built on friendship, trust, equity and respect for cultural and linguistic diversity.

What area of your work do you wish you could do all over again? What would you change?

There's not much I would do over again. I am thrilled with the success of the NWC and I am so excited about the increasing diversity that we are seeing in Southwest Saskatchewan. Newcomers who are choosing to make Southwest Saskatchewan their home are making our part of the world such a richer, more dynamic place to live and work.

What advice would you give to future cultural leaders that want to follow in your footsteps?

I would have two bits of advice to share with others who are interested in this kind of work. First, I would encourage them to get involved through volunteerism. In 2005, I completed a six-month unpaid human rights internship in

Australia and I credit this invaluable experience with opening up the many opportunities that have presented themselves to me since that time. Second, I would encourage others to dream big and to worry about the details later! I believe that if you are really passionate about something and you have a vision, anything is possible.

What is your favorite cultural activity and why?

I would have to say that my favourite cultural activity involves meeting and getting to know people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. My job offers me this opportunity on a daily basis - it's like having the opportunity to travel without ever leaving your hometown! I also love to travel and I love languages and dance (although I've got no real skills to speak of in either of the latter two areas).

If you were able to spend a day with any Saskatchewan cultural figure, current or historic, who would it be and what would you ask?

Wow... there are so many! I would love to spend a day with Joni Mitchell or Buffy Saint-Marie or Big Bear. I would probably ask them all of the same questions you've just asked me!

What do you think is the "best place to be" in Saskatchewan?

Well Southwest Saskatchewan of course! After spending about 11 years out of province and out of country, I finally came home to Swift Current in 2007 and have never looked back. Although my outside experiences were absolutely invaluable, I just love the prairies and I am so happy to be back in the Southwest.



Reggie and Louise Oelke serve together as SaskCulture Board members 2008-2010

Q & A WITH REGGIE NEWKIRK

What cultural projects are you working on presently or have just completed?

I am involved in two cultural projects: I volunteer with Steering Committee of Sisters in the Spirit. It hopes to establish a Place of Reflection that will have an original sculpture and a place to sit for families and visitors to reflect on missing loved ones and friends. And, I volunteer with the Saskatchewan African Canadian Historical Museum Board, which is working to commemorate the 100th anniversary of immigrants and homesteaders of African Descent who came from Oklahoma and Ontario to Saskatchewan. The virtual museum is unique in that it is "housed" on-line and available to all who have access to the Internet.

Is there a particular accomplishment or contribution to cultural development in Saskatchewan you are most proud of and why?

I am very proud of SaskCulture and the tremendous work it does to provide training, funding and guidance to cultural organizations across the province. SaskCulture has made a substantive cultural contribution to the province's motto "From Many Strength". In addition to providing funds, Saskculture encourages organizations to create programs that engage the province's multitude of diverse cultures. These programs address a large array of arts and historical and cultural industries. In many respects the people of Saskatchewan are the envy of other provinces due to the



unique commitment and support of Saskatchewan Lotteries to culture.

What area of your work do you wish you could do all over again? What would you change?

I seldom imagine myself doing things over again because I give considerable forethought before taking action. I use a six-step guide: 1) ascertain the facts; 2) consult with my family, friends and advisors in the field to make sure my perception of the facts is valid; 3) assess the principle(s) that pertain to the issue; 4) pray and meditate on the information; 5) make the decision; and 6) act upon the decision with confidence and optimism.

What advice would you give to future cultural leaders that want to follow in your footsteps?

I would urge them not to follow in my footsteps. Rather my advice to anyone is to be true to yourself; listen to the calling of your own, mind and soul. Follow that for which you have an undying passion. That said, the footsteps that I try to follow in any leadership role are these: when called upon to initiate, direct and coordinate the affairs of any organization one should endeavor to win the confidence and affection of those whom it is one's privilege to serve. Investigate and acquaint oneself with the considered views, prevailing sentiments and personal convictions of those you serve and purge ones' deliberations and conduct of self-contained aloofness, sus-

picion of secrecy and the stifling atmosphere of doctoral assertiveness. Strive to remove from words and deeds any savor of partiality, self-centeredness and prejudice. By inviting discussion, ventilating grievances, as well as welcoming advice, a sense of interdependence and co-partnership is fostered between oneself and the people you serve.

What is your favorite cultural activity?

My favorite cultural activity is music. Whether it be listening to musicians perform or performing with them. However, I find that I enjoy just about every cultural activity, especially when I am with cultural enthusiasts. I find their enjoyment and passion is contagious.

If you were able to spend a day with any Saskatchewan cultural figure, current and historic, who would it be and what would I ask?

I am unable to select one individual. I would prefer a small group conversation with the following participants: Big Bear, Gabriel Dumont, Louis Riel, Dr. Albert Shadd and Tommy Douglas. I would ask them to discuss—"what do they think of Saskatchewan in the 21st Century?"

What do you think is the "best place to be" in Saskatchewan?

I think the best place to be in Saskatchewan is that place in your mind where you know that Saskatchewan is unique, exciting, diverse, creative and is as capable as anywhere else in the world.

TAPPING INTO THE Northern Spirits



PHOTO COURTESY NORTHERN DISTRICT FOR SPORT, CULTURE AND RECREATION

As reality shows, such as *Canadian Idol* or *So Youth Think you Can Dance*, continue to capture the attention of aspiring talent, Saskatchewan's northern youth have an even better opportunity to show their stuff.

For the past four years, Northern Spirits has brought together 50-70 youth from different northern communities to participate in a workshop where they can get hands on experience in music and visual arts. Youth learn a range of skills required to put on a professional talent showcase. They learn set design, stage management, production, and public speaking, as well as working with a live band and practicing their skills in a real radio station.

"It's a great opportunity for youth interested in developing their music, arts and culture skills," says Judy MacLeod-Campbell, Program Manager for Culture and Community Development, Northern District for Sport, Culture and Recreation. "Many youth who register for the program have never performed in public. Through Northern Spirits, they get a chance to perform and build their confidence, as well as getting experience and mentorship from industry professionals."

At the end of the workshop, 20-25 participants are selected to put on a Northern Spirits Showcase that is held in Prince Albert each year. In 2011,

Northern Spirits will be held on February 10 at the Exhibition Centre as part of the Prince Albert Winter Festival.

Many participants from past showcases have gone on to put their training to use. After their Northern Spirits experience, northern hip-hop artist Blu went on to record his own CD and fiddler Tristen

Durocher continues to perform for audiences at different events.

"They will all tell you that Northern Spirits helped them overcome shyness when singing and performing," says MacLeod-Campbell.

This year, Northern Spirits received an Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Leadership Grant to help enhance the mentorship opportunities for the youth.

Northern Spirits was originally developed by Musqua Entertainment in their efforts to mentor youth in their confidence to work in this area. According to MacLeod-Campbell, "Musqua Entertainment holds annual auditions for Voices of the North and after having several youth try out, they realized that some additional training would help them understand the process and increase the quality of their auditions and opportunities." They approached the Northern District for Sport, Culture and Recreation to help them extend the reach of the program.

Today, Northern Spirits operates thanks to a solid partnership of Musqua Entertainment, Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation, Prince Albert Grand Council, Meadow Lake Tribal Council, and the Northern District for Sport, Culture and Recreation, which receives support from Saskatchewan Lotteries.

Nurture Young Leaders!

Community or cultural groups looking to support opportunities for Aboriginal youth to demonstrate their leadership skills through mentorships with qualified Aboriginal arts and cultural leaders are encouraged to check out the **Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Leadership Grant (AACLG)**

Annual deadlines: April 15, October 15

Visit www.saskculture.sk.ca or call (306) 780-9284/
Toll-free: 1-866-476-6830 for more information.

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CREATIVE KIDS Attracting Interest

By Mei Shan Wan



As the end of the Creative Kids pilot year draws near, several communities in Saskatchewan have experienced the growing demand for this new charitable giving program. Interest is growing, and the town of Shaunavon, can attest to that.

"The word is getting out, and there is obviously a lot of interest," says Wendy Thienes, treasurer of the Shaunavon Creative Kids local committee. As one of the eight communities selected for the pilot year, Shaunavon has received several funding requests and received numerous inquiries from not only their own community, but from the surrounding area as well.

Creative Kids offers financial assistance to kids and youth who would like to participate in art, culture, or creative experiences. Shaunavon recognized the importance of this program and what it would mean to their community. "When the pilot project came out, we were eager to apply. We had the opportunity four years ago to help disadvantaged

Creative Kids offers financial assistance to kids and youth who would like to participate in art, culture, or creative experiences.

youth. With the help of a grant; we created Take Part With The Arts. At that point, we knew there was a need for a program like this in our community," says Thienes.

Prior to assembling their Creative Kids committee, Shaunavon had been active in providing assistance to kids in the area of dance. However, funding was limited. The Creative Kids program allowed the community to move forward with developing their arts and culture sector.

"The program raised awareness as a community. It made us realize that perhaps we were lacking a bit in the variety of offerings. We were focused in the area of dance and, it turns out, there is a good cross section from a variety of disciplines, such as piano, voice, organ, art, and language. We saw there were a lack of music teachers in our community and a lack of art lessons being offered."

Now that the program and committee is in place, local residents can apply to be part of Creative Kids through the Shaunavon Creative Kids Committee. The Committee meets on a monthly basis to discuss applications and fundraising initiatives. While upcoming fundraising events are being organized for 2011, the committee has already started to receive monetary support from the community.

As a music teacher and the director of Shaunavon's Culture Centre, Thienes addresses the significance of Creative Kids and the need for continued sponsorships and donations, "the more we can expose kids to arts and culture, the better. It's lacking in our schools throughout our province and not everyone can afford

arts and culture lessons because they can be very expensive."

Fundraising is an important aspect of this program as Creative Kids relies on donations. SaskCulture provides operational funding, so that one hundred per cent of all funds raised for Creative Kids go towards supporting program participants. Creative Kids is a province-wide program and any Saskatchewan resident who meets the application criteria can apply. Children and youth with financial barriers can apply to receive up to \$750 per year to contribute towards costs associated with arts and culture participation.

For more information, call (306) 780-9469 or email: info@creativekidssask.ca

Building a future of creativity!

Arts and cultural activities are important to the intellectual and emotional development of children and youth; however, not all kids get a chance to participate.

Creative Kids reduces the financial and social barriers faced by children and youth who want to participate in quality arts and cultural programs. To apply or find out how you can help, visit www.creativekidssask.ca

creative kids

landscape

SaskCulture Inc. receives financial assistance from:



PHOTO BY LAURA HALE



#404 - 2125 11th Avenue, Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 3X3
Tel: 306.780.9284 Fax: 306.780.9252 Email: saskculture.info@saskculture.sk.ca www.saskculture.sk.ca