

Culture Builds Community!

Engage

WINTER 2014 VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2



creative
kids

What's Inside:

Sons of Anarchy star Kim Coates supports Creative Kids
Hazlet welcomes international students
Culture Days races ahead in Kindersley

Sask
Culture

FUNDING
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VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2

Engage

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is designed to

highlight
the work of
cultural leaders,
volunteers

and the

diversity
of activities

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Trust Fund for Sport,
Culture and Recreation.



ON THE COVER: *Sons of Anarchy* star, Kim Coates, helps host Creative Mayhem along with Saskatoon Creative Kids Committee. Left to right: Tracy Chudy, Vinesh Kohli, Tracy Schiele, Kim Coates, Jami Young (Chair), Danielle Hoffart, Maeghan McGrath, Jill Pelton.



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Direct Inquires to:

Diane Ell, Editor
dell@saskculture.sk.ca

Shaunna Grandish, Publishing Coordinator
sgrandish@saskculture.sk.ca

404, 2125 11th Avenue, Regina SK S4P 3X3
Tel: (306) 780.9284
www.saskculture.sk.ca

Graphic Design:

J. Lauder Publishing & Design
jlauder@myaccess.ca

Contributing Writers:

Shawn Bauche, Michelle Brownridge, Marian Donnelly, Sarah Ferguson, Shaunna Grandish, Damon Badger Heit, Danica Lorer, Paul Spasoff

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General Manager's Message

At SaskCulture, the word 'community' gets bantered about a lot.

We talk about community engagement, communities of interest, Saskatchewan communities, the cultural community, northern communities, rural communities, the business community, First Nations communities, the multicultural community; you name it and we can turn it into a community.

Given our propensity for using the term community means just about anything could fit within this issue of *Engage*, which is themed 'community engagement'. Or does it? When we speak about community engagement we are speaking about a very particular way of going about our work, or a particular style of operating at SaskCulture that focuses on 'building community'.

For the past few years we have used *Engage* magazine to share stories about cultural activities in the province, from a variety of communities, that serve to build community capacity by creating citizen engagement. The stories are about cultural activities that have received some portion of their revenue from one of the grant programs that SaskCulture delivers directly, or through partnerships, with funds from the Culture Section of Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation.

Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation supports a network of over 12,000 beneficiary sport, culture and recreation groups from over



800 communities, with over 600,000 program registrations, comprised of families and individuals in communities throughout the province. The delivery system is well-embedded into the Saskatchewan way of life, and serves much of the population. Just think of all the festivals, community theatre productions, museums, galleries, local heritage sites, cultural celebrations, and arts activities that take place in our communities! By providing funding support to local sport, culture and recreation programming directed by local residents, as well as core support to many provincial sport, culture and recreation groups, Saskatchewan's lottery system sustains the heartbeat of volunteer-driven activity in the province, otherwise known as 'community engagement'.

On January 13, 2014, the Honourable Kevin Doherty, Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport announced a renewed lottery agreement which guarantees that the sport, culture and recreation community throughout the province will continue to benefit from Saskatchewan Lotteries net

proceeds. The current Government's continued support of sport, culture and recreation in this manner shows its recognition of the value that sport, culture and recreation activities play in building communities in Saskatchewan. SaskCulture is very pleased that the Government of Saskatchewan has shown its support for the work of the cultural community by renewing the lottery agreement at 3.75% for another five years.

As you read through the articles in this issue, or any issue of *Engage*, you will be impressed by the creativity of Saskatchewan people as they come up with innovative ways to come together, build social capital and, ultimately, community! And, you will also see the tremendous reach, influence and impact of those lottery-derived dollars in our communities.

Sincerely,

Rose Gilks

Lottery Licence Agreement signed on Jan. 13, 2014, Hon. Kevin Doherty, Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport, joined the tri-global partners – Sask Sport, SaskCulture and Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association – in announcing the next five year Lottery Licence Agreement.

Competition unites community theatre in Saskatchewan

BY SHAUNNA GRANDISH



Who says culture isn't competitive? Every year, several theatre groups compete for the top prize at Theatre Saskatchewan's TheatreOne competition. While everyone wants to win, the positive experience and networking is the true prize.

The TheatreOne Competition, which features one act plays, began in 1988 with the following year being the first as a competitive event. Over the subsequent years, the event has grown in size with now nine different groups from across Saskatchewan performing over three nights to an audience. Each year, the competition also travels to a new town or city in the province.

"It's really fun, whether you come out as an audience member or you are participating," says Melissa Biro, Theatre Saskatchewan's interim executive director. "It's just fun!"

The competition brings together a group of people who love theatre and who want to engage with others and share their passion with everyone in their community, so much so that they are willing to give up much of their free time to make theatre come alive in Saskatchewan.

In 2013, TheatreOne was held at the Regina Performing Arts Centre and Crocus 80 of Weyburn was the big winner, taking home the Shumiatcher Trophy for Best Play, the Florence Eberle Memorial Trophy for Best Director, and the Janet Lowndes Trophy for Acting.

Biro explains that the competition is a great learning experience for theatre groups since they have to perform outside their regular community to a new audience who may have a different reaction to their material. Every year there is a good mix of returning and new groups, so they also have an opportunity to learn from each other.

"There is a wide range of emotions experienced throughout the weekend," says Biro. "Everything is done in a positive way. Everyone works together to improve."



An apprenticeship program is also offered through the competition. Ten individuals from ten theatre groups have the chance to attend all the adjudications and workshops during TheatreOne. It is also a great networking opportunity. Volunteers are also vital to TheatreOne's success, according to Biro. They work like "crazy" in the months leading up to the festival to ensure its success.

"If anything, I've discovered it's a testament to the love and passion of volunteering and theatre in this province," adds Biro.

PREVIOUS PAGE TOP: Theatre Saskatchewan Past President Jarrod Jeanson presents the Nancy and Sam Goodfellow Trophy for Acting to Bernie Cardin of the Battleford Community Players. PREVIOUS PAGE BOTTOM: Jon Josephson presents the Best Actor/Actress in a Supporting Role Award to Sharon Pope. TOP: Awards to be presented at TheatreOne 2013 in Regina. BOTTOM: TheatreOne 2012 adjudication in Kerrobert.

PRESERVE HERITAGE.

In 2012, traditional skiff building was part of an Elders' Gathering in Pinehouse, SK, funded through the Métis Cultural Development Fund.

MAKE THINGS HAPPEN!

Funding available from the **Métis Cultural Development Fund**

Supports activity that helps to preserve and pass on Métis culture and traditions.

Deadlines: Oct. 31 & April 30

Sask **Culture** FUNDING PROVIDED BY **LOTTERIES SK**

Visit www.saskculture.sk.ca for details.



CARFAC bridges gap with Aboriginal artists

BY DAMON BADGER HEIT

Several years ago, CARFAC Saskatchewan (Canadian Artists' Representation/Le Front Des Artistes Canadiens) identified a gap in terms of its service to, and engagement with, the Aboriginal artist community. While there were already existing initiatives in place at CARFAC to support artist initiatives, there was limited contact with Aboriginal artists who would benefit from them. So, CARFAC went to work to address the gap.

Since 2009, CARFAC has been working on the development of a document entitled *Industry Standards/Best Practices, Aboriginal Arts*. CARFAC Saskatchewan is a cultural non-profit organization that is tasked to improve the status and wellbeing of Saskatchewan visual artists through research, public education, service and advocacy.

In 2009, CARFAC engaged Aboriginal Arts and Culture Leader, Audrey Dreaver, a member of the Mistawasis First Nation, to reach out and visit nine communities from across Saskatchewan to obtain the input of Aboriginal artists across the province. This input was focused on the importance



of copyright, cultural exchange, marketing and the diversity of art practice amongst First Nations and Métis people. These meetings resulted in a document, *Industry Standards/Best Practices, Aboriginal Arts*. A series of outreach and community engagement initiatives began to occur through partnerships with community organizations, and Dreaver had extensive experience in the cultural sector as an independent curator, art instructor and exhibit consultant with local First Nations communities in both urban and rural settings.

Dreaver says, "We pulled together a committee, which included Mary Longman, Leah Dorian, and Robin Brass, to ensure that the statements were captured. Across all interviews, a common statement emerged. All artists said, 'there should be a gathering, if not every year, than every other year, to learn from each other. To learn techniques. To talk about common issues'." Through these interviews, a picture began to emerge of areas that needed to be addressed. "All those words (in the *Industry Standards/Best Practices, Aboriginal Arts* draft document), are direct



things, and industry standards and (ultimately) to ratify as a community the words of the artists presented in 2009.”

CARFAC wishes to acknowledge the following partners: Oskayak High School, CARFAC National, Tribe Inc., Indigenous Peoples Arts Collective of Prince Albert, Common Weal Community Arts Inc., First Nations University of Canada’s Indian Fine Arts Department, City of Saskatoon, the Saskatchewan Craft Council, Mann Art Gallery and SaskCulture/ Saskatchewan Lotteries for funding assistance through the Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Leadership Grant.

comments from the people that were interviewed,” adds Dreaver.

One of the issues that required more discussion was ‘cultural appropriation’, which is the unilateral decision to use someone else’s imagery without permission, in visual arts. CARFAC opened this up for discussion with two panels in both Saskatoon in May 2013, at CARFAC’s AGM, and more recently in Regina at the First Nations University in November 2013. The panelists presented on the topics of cultural appropriation, from examples of Colonial paintings of ages past that became accepted ‘realities’ of who native people are, to ongoing examples in present day Saskatchewan that contribute to the broader populations misunderstanding of Aboriginal people, and ultimately, the inaccurate depiction and portrayal of Aboriginal identity. Dreaver explains how it was helpful, because “non-Aboriginal people began to understand what we are talking about.”

Having achieved some initial success in these endeavors, CARFAC has continued to pursue one of the more ambitious aspects of the feedback they received from the community consultations. In May 2014, this multi-year, community-based work will come together as an Aboriginal Artist Symposium in Saskatoon.

“This idea is to bridge youth with the Aboriginal artists in attendance and hopefully build a connection that will be impactful on the Oskayak (young people) students,” says Dreaver. She also hopes to include students as part of the symposium. “It will start their connection to the artists and the content of the *Industry Standards/ Best Practices, Aboriginal Arts* document. Artists from all over the province will talk about art, learn about art, learn new



Traditional Knowledge and Cultural Appropriation Panel discuss the need for Aboriginal artists to have opportunities to share and learn from each other. Panel members include: Audrey Dreaver, artist and curator; David Garneau, associate professor of Visual Arts, University of Regina; Adrian Stimson, artist; and Linda Young, artist. Other presenters include: Leslie Ann Wilson, program consultant, Saskatchewan Arts Board; and Carmen Robertson, associate professor of Contemporary Indigenous Art History, University of Regina.

Nurture Young Leaders!

Check out the Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Leadership Grant.

This grant supports 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.

Annual deadlines: October 15, April 15

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





The world meets in Hazlet

BY DANICA LORER

The village of Hazlet in southwestern Saskatchewan has become an international cultural intersection point. In 2005, the school had only 39 students and its future was uncertain. Reaching out to cultures around the world has injected a new life into the community.



"The international program probably saved our school and it brought a vibrant spirit back," says Lindsay Alliban, Hazlet's economic development officer. Early in the program she opened the classroom to international students and is now an international recruiter.

The idea for the Chinook International Program at Hazlet School came to the school's principal, Kristy Sletten while she was on maternity leave nine years ago. "I had the opportunity to study the school from an outside perspective. I could see that the enrolment trend was not positive and I knew that we would have to get creative to sustain the school," says Sletten, who has seen the number of local students enrolled nearly double to 75.

The program has welcomed more than 80 international students in its first seven years. "When growing up in rural Saskatchewan, you have a fairly monochromatic experience in terms of exposure to other cultures. This program has brought in kids from over 20 countries and has truly created more acceptance for other cultures within our community," says Sletten. "Probably the biggest difference that I have seen is in the students who have graduated and left Hazlet. Once they join the world they become well aware of the value of their exposure to all of the various cultures that they have seen at a young age. Many of them comment on the ease in which they have been able to adapt to the bigger multicultural world, that many urban Saskatchewan residents enjoy."

Students in the program are in grades 10 to 12. Aside from classes, they take part in sports, attend community groups, volunteer, take class trips and become immersed in prairie culture. Students learn about the culture of Canada and share



their own culture during international nights with food, music and information booths.

The difference in English language skills can be a challenge, and Alliban gives credit to teachers for their hard work. Sletten says, "Recently, some friction has developed because at times the Canadian students feel less important than the international students. So we need to balance how each group is treated." The size of the community can cause anxiety for students from large cities, but offers something truly unique. "The small town experience is so different for these kids than what they would get in a city, because here they become part of the bigger picture. They get to meet everyone in the community and everyone is interested in their story," she explains.

Students leaving the program have forged lifelong friendships with the people of Hazlet. "Hazlet may be small, but its impact on the world has been significant," says Sletten. Community is created through the program and sustained by travel and technology. According to Alliban, "Our community has one hundred people, or three hundred people within our surrounding area, but there are people across the world who feel part of our community."



PREVIOUS PAGE TOP: This mural was created by the international and Hazlet students, and represents the following countries: Vietnam, Thailand, Hong Kong, Germany, Norway, Austria, Venezuela, Colombia and China. BOTTOM: Students gathered in the school hallway to say good-bye to Brazilian students before they went back to Brazil after five months in Hazlet. TOP LEFT: Hazlet and Brazilian students having some fun. BOTTOM LEFT: Students Gersio Fernandes and Carlos Azevedo enjoying the snow. RIGHT: Mexican student Pepe Navarro joins other Hazlet students for bingo game.

Build Community with Culture!

Check out the Municipal Cultural Planning and Engagement Grant.

This grant supports 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.

Deadline: February 15

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

Sask **Culture**

Saskatchewan
LOTTERIES

New Deadline!

Junior curators helping preserve the past in Meacham

BY PAUL SPASOFF



“The program started with the kids themselves. They were wanting to be part of the museum,” says Flo Frank, mayor of Meacham and one of the founding members of the museum.

“Several of them are very attached to the museum and have been from the start,” she explains. “Three of them stopped by regularly and asked questions about the exhibits, showed a keen interest in learning more about them and were able to tell other kids about what they had learned. That is how it started.”

As junior curators, the children are responsible for giving tours and talking about the exhibits, which are changed every three months. They also play the DVD that accompanies each show, as well as ask visitors to sign the guest book and thank them for coming. Four of the junior curators have also attended museum board meetings, where they provided reports on progress. They also participated in planning sessions for exhibits and shows.

“If there’s four of them together, they’ll break the room into quadrants,” Frank explains. “If there’s two of them, they’ll break the room into half so that they know a few key things on each side.

“The older ones – after they’ve been there a few times – they know quite a bit about a lot of it. They then can give a little tour. Our museum is so tiny, a tour doesn’t take too long. But, there’s lots and lots of stuff in it all the time.”

Six-year-old junior curator Spencer Saretzky adds, “It’s fun to do! It’s cool showing people what you know.”

In order to understand their responsibilities at the museum and lead visitors – predominantly adults – on tours, the junior curators are required to take training as part of the program. Given the age difference within the junior curator group, the children helped design the training so that they could learn the same



By its very name, a history museum focuses on history. It preserves the past and honours the olden days. At the Meacham Museum, they are doing things a little bit differently. To help celebrate the past, they are turning to the future.

The Junior Curators Program was established in June 2013 to give local children an opportunity to become further involved with the museum, which is located in the community of 93 residents

approximately 70 km east of Saskatoon. There are currently eight children involved in the program between the ages of five and nine.



things in the same way. Once they complete the training, along with 10 hours of volunteer service at the museum, the junior curators receive a certificate. To start off the new year, six of the junior curators had completed the program and received their certificate. The other two members are currently completing the training and volunteer service.

“It’s not really a structured program,” Frank says. “The kids organized it and this is what they want to do. They love the

museum and call it ‘our museum.’”

With the success of the Junior Curators Program – and the interest in preserving the past – their children are going to have to share it with their friends. The successful introduction of the program has led to increased interest from other people in the community.

“We get to do some cool things at the museum and my friends think that’s pretty cool,” says Spencer’s nine-year-old sister, Kayla. “Some of them want to become junior curators now.”

Junior curators learn the important role the museum in Meacham has in preserving the community's past.

BUILD CAPACITY.

In 2012, Common Ground Collective received a Capacity Building Grant to hold community consultations on the restoration and re-use of the historic Battlefords Town Hall/Opera House.



MAKE THINGS HAPPEN!

Funding available from the
Capacity Building Grant

Supports new and existing cultural organizations in their efforts to build capacity and/or partnerships.
Deadlines: Oct. 15 & May 7



Visit www.saskculture.sk.ca for details.

Saskatoon's Street Meet Festival: challenging perceptions of public art

BY SARAH FERGUSON



For many, the term “graffiti” conjures up a variety of negative stereotypes, but Saskatoon resident Keeley Haftner is working hard to change that perception.

This past summer, from July 5-7, 2013, Haftner collaborated with Saskatoon's AKA Gallery and a group of renowned artists to create Saskatoon's first annual Street Meet Festival. The Festival, held in the Riversdale area of the city, focused on street, public and graffiti art, and highlighted the work of four Canadian artists: Robyn Love, a yarn bomber and performance artist from Newfoundland; Shelley Miller, an icing muralist from Montreal; Corey Bulpitt, a Haida graffiti artist from Vancouver; and David Larivière, a local public intervention artist, working out of Saskatoon's PAVED Arts centre.

The Street Meet Festival also featured a keynote address from Art Historian Dr. Anna Waclawek from Concordia University. Known for her expertise related to the medium, Waclawek's book *Graffiti and Street Art* touches on street art and graffiti examples from around the world. “It was important for us to bring her in to contextualize the street art concept for the audience,” Haftner says.

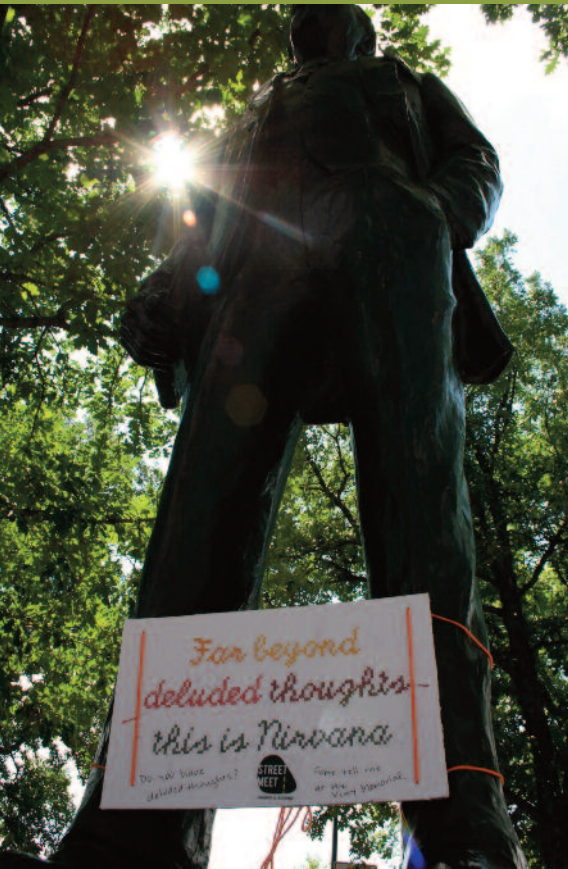
Haftner says she approached AKA Gallery with the festival concept one year prior, as a reaction to what she saw as a dominance of permanent sculpture in the city of Saskatoon. “The idea was to provide some [artistic] alternatives [for the public], including more ephemeral works, works of different mediums and more conceptual content than is normally seen around the city,” she says. Haftner says that the festival also provided a forum for open

discussion on the purpose of street art, and its systems. “There are a lot of different opinions about what graffiti art is, and there are different stereotypes about it that aren't true,” she says. “We wanted to have a conversation about it.”

Miller, whose unique, feminine style of tagging involved using edible icing to decorate walls of the city, says the festival provided Saskatoon residents with an opportunity to broaden their interpretation of street art. “For some people, public art still has a negative connotation... it's very institutionalized, and has had nothing to do with public interest or interaction,” she explains. “But I think that's changing now.”

Love, who engaged the public with a performance related to Saskatoon's colonial history, involving a scavenger hunt and her own handmade potash soap,

Artists Shelley Miller, icing muralist, Robyn Love, yarn bomber, and Corey Bulpitt, Haida graffiti artist, show-off their public artwork on the streets of Saskatoon during the Street Meet Festival. Participants interacting with the many facets of public art around Saskatoon.



says, “One of the goals of the festival was to foster awareness that ‘public art’ is not just a discreet object placed in a public plaza.”

Other works included a Haida graffiti pod of killer whales, made by Bullpitt, that now



graces the back of the AKA Gallery, and a socio-political installation by Lariviere entitled “Liquid Bacon”. Local works included Andrew Milne’s travelling museum van and a yarn bombing at Saskatoon’s Hilton Garden Inn by Love and JenSK.

Funding pending, Haftner says she hopes next year’s festival will gain an international perspective.

“Besides including local artists, we’re looking at bringing in a Filipino artist and an artist from New York,” she says.



Creative Kids descends into *Creative Mayhem*

BY SHAWN BAUCHE



In an intimate setting at Saskatoon's Weczeria restaurant on Broadway Avenue, men and women clad in leather jackets, jeans and the occasional bandana, chatted alongside a table of tantalizing hors d'oeuvres. The group was social and enthusiastic, with undertones of anticipation and maybe a slight nervousness anticipating the guest of the evening. Moments later, *Sons of Anarchy* star, Kim Coates, appears on the scene to greet the crowd. Any nervousness subsides as Coates shares his humour and anecdotes, and begins posing for photos with the room of Creative Kids sponsors and VIP ticket holders. Coates' enthusiasm is contagious as he starts signing 8x10 glossies of his "Tig" Trager TV persona, and sharing stories with the group.

So begins *Creative Mayhem*, a fundraiser coordinated by the Creative Kids Committee in Saskatoon. Jami Young, co-chair, Saskatoon Creative Kids Committee, met Coates a few years earlier through his involvement in various arts advocacy efforts and told him about the Creative Kids program. Coates happened to have a very brief window in the middle of a whirlwind North American tour and wanted to help

out. The day before Hallowe'en presented the perfect opportunity for a colossally fun, outlaw-chic, edgy soiree to raise funds for Creative Kids in Saskatoon, his hometown. "It was an amazing experience to work with Kim on this," Young says. "Not only did he so graciously donate his time for the evening, Kim was very engaged in the planning process and absolutely committed to ensuring that the event was a success for Creative Kids."

The second round of the evening's festivities brought guests to the Kinsmen Hall for dancing with country outlaw band Wyatt, a fun photo booth, caricature artist and a chance for more people to mingle with Coates. The silent auction included a *Sons of Anarchy* poster autographed by the entire cast, generously provided by Coates. The Saskatoon Kinsmen were happy to provide the venue for *Creative Mayhem*. A month prior, the Kinsmen Club of Saskatoon made a \$25,000 gift to benefit Creative Kids applicants in Saskatoon and the event was a way for Saskatoon businesses and *Sons of Anarchy* fans to match the Kinsmen donation.

Coates's passion for the arts is evident.

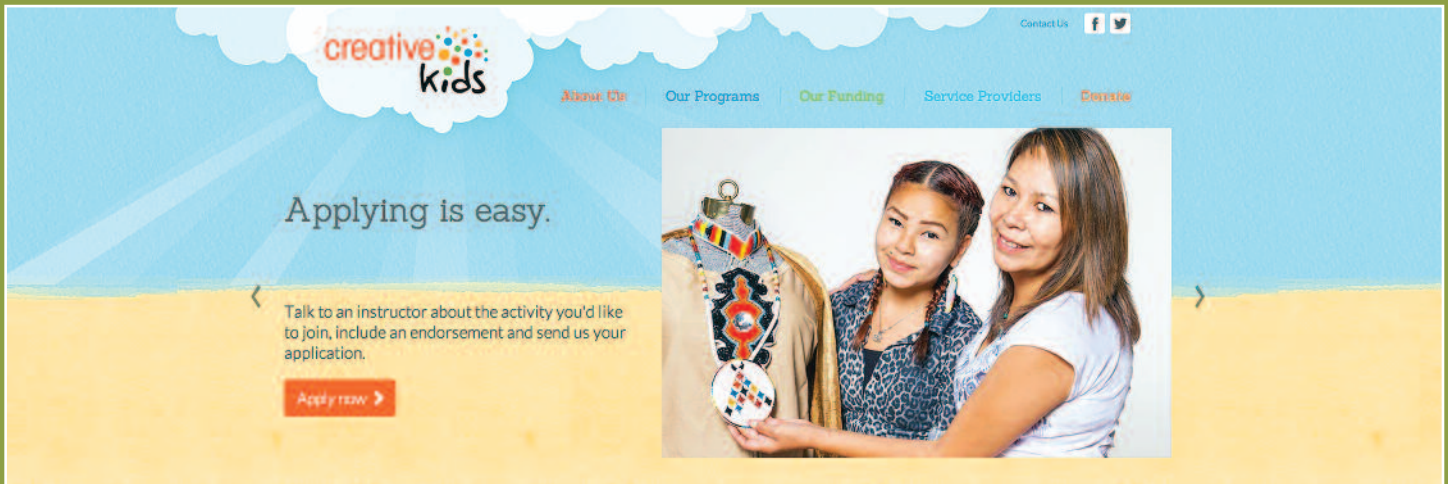
Although he was only in Saskatoon for a few days, Coates met with a variety of media to discuss Creative Kids, the benefits of the arts and his role in *Sons of Anarchy*. "Art is really where it's at," he said to the crowd. "You cannot have engineering, farming, business without art." Taking a University of Saskatchewan drama class on a whim helped to ignite his passion for acting. Describing this revelation Coates says, "All of you being here tonight, giving to Creative Kids will help our children lead a better, fulfilling life, which makes for a better society, which makes for better communities."

The Saskatoon Creative Kids Committee also auctioned off an evening with Coates to raise additional funds. The dinner took place the night before *Creative Mayhem* and the highest bidders were a Saskatoon family that included an aspiring young filmmaker who was thrilled to receive some solid career advice from Coates.

As for *Creative Mayhem's* impact, Young says that event sponsors are excited by the idea of an annual Creative Mayhem soiree. "Everyone at the VIP portion really enjoyed the experience of sharing time with Kim and having the opportunity to learn more about Creative Kids. Sponsors are already asking what is happening next year, eagerly awaiting to see what we come up with for 2014's festivities!"

The entire evening, including the VIP reception, evening of entertainment and silent auction, combined with the Kinsmen sponsorship, means that close to 100 kids facing financial barriers in Saskatoon will have opportunities to learn to play musical instruments, register for dance classes or try their hand at theatre to become the next Tig Trager.

Actor Kim Coates poses for a photo with Dr. David Millar, chair, Creative Kids' Provincial Advisory Committee.



Creative Kids launches new web site www.CreativeKidsSask.ca

Creative Kids is celebrating a new year with a brand new web site. In keeping with the program's New Year's resolution to create a hub for all things Creative Kids, the web site is now an updated and sleeker version of its old self. **CreativeKidsSask.ca** showcases photos of the types of activities Creative Kids supports, and offers plenty of options for potential applicants and for those learning about the program.

"We have made it easy for applicants to find artistic instructors and cultural programmers in Saskatchewan," says Shawn Bauche, program coordinator, Creative Kids. "With an ever-growing online directory of service providers that's easily searchable by location and interest. A step-by-step application breakdown will soon be supplemented by a how-to video that will answer a number of common questions. Service providers can also find answers to their questions by downloading the service provider guide book and registration forms directly from the site."

Sponsors are now showcased in a vibrant logo garden. "As some of you know, we also accept online donations and now have full online connections to promotions such as our holiday gift catalogue," adds Bauche.

Visit **CreativeKidsSask.ca** to see what we are up to, and book your spot at featured events such as the RCMP Charity Ball Gala, taking place May 24, 2014.

Save the Date...

2014 Creative Kids
RCMP Charity Ball

May 24, 2014

For tickets, please call
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IN SUPPORT OF
creative kids



Culture Days includes 'amazing race'

How one town got everyone running for culture!

BY MARIAN DONNELLY

The Town of Kindersley has been involved with Culture Days since its debut in Saskatchewan in 2010. In 2013, Kindersley upped its game, holding a number of activities including an outdoor concert, heritage walking tours, the unveiling of their new Town Square design, the “K-Town Chow Down”, and an innovative engagement opportunity called “Amazing Race: K-Town Edition*”.

SaskCulture connected with Wayne Gibson, communications coordinator, Jennifer Metherel-Potter, manager of recreation, and Michelle McMillan, manager of culture and heritage, from the Town of Kindersley. They have been involved in presenting Culture Days activities in Kindersley since Culture Days began in 2010, and were at the heart of the Culture Days weekend in 2013.

SC: *Tell us about your Culture Days activities, especially the idea of the 'Amazing Race: K-Town Edition'. What was involved in the race?*

Michelle: “Building on the success of previous years in Kindersley, we decided to plan a full weekend of Culture Days events in 2013, with one or two major activities on each of the three days. The 'Amazing Race' involved a series of activity stations where participants completed hands-on challenges or tasks related to the arts and culture groups in Kindersley. Some examples included learning a belly dance routine, constructing a clay sculpture, performing a theatrical monologue, answering historic quizzes and trying square dancing. Participants travelled by foot and were given clues directing them to the next location. Each site was chosen for its historical or cultural significance to the community. Teams ranged in size from two to six members, and ages of participants ranged from five to 80 years old.”

SC: *What led you to establishing an 'Amazing Race' as part of your Culture Days weekend?*

Michelle: “This year we aimed to increase the level of interactivity by creating an active event that encouraged more participation from local groups while exposing participants in a unique way to the many cultural opportunities within our community.”

Wayne: “We utilized a well-known brand and adapted it in a fresh way to our local audience.”

UPCOMING DATES:
September 26 - 28, 2014

SC: What was the community response to the race?

Jennifer: “The overall response was exceptional! Ninety participants (representing 20 different teams) pre-registered for the 'Amazing Race'. More than 20 volunteers assisted with traffic control and safety, managing activity stations, and logistics. Response from the participants themselves was extremely positive, as well as from community members who became engaged as they witnessed teams racing from one location to another. Participants were asked to complete a survey following the event. Most stated that they thoroughly enjoyed the 'Amazing Race' and would be watching for registration next year.”

SC: Would you consider it a successful approach to community engagement?

Jennifer: “Absolutely. The 'Amazing Race' appealed to a different demographic who typically haven't been engaged in cultural activities in Kindersley. In addition, it was successful in attracting interest from a broad range of people due to the unique competition aspect and accessibility for all ages.”

SC: What was your favorite part of the whole Culture Days weekend?

Wayne: “I was excited to see the enthusiasm of new Culture Days participants, and encouraged by the continued support for returning events.”

Jennifer: “I was ecstatic with the number of participants in the 'Amazing Race' event. When we received 10 team applications, I was excited. Then within a week, we reached 20 teams! I was shocked but ready for the challenge of running this event. Overall, our Saturday events ('Amazing Race' and K-Town Chow Down) provided a great sequence of programming.”

Michelle: “Overall, I was impressed with the increase in participation. Our ingenuity in this year's programming led to attendance tripling. Furthermore, I was excited to see members of the community experience new activities and opening themselves up to new interests.”

SC: What do you think you might do for next year?

Wayne: “One of the successes of this year's events was in solidifying greater participation from local cultural groups, and that will be something we will want to continue to build on so that those groups and individuals will feel empowered to continue to share what they do with the community.”

Michelle: “Another success was the increased public awareness of the cultural arts within our community. By hosting an activity that involved participants moving from location to location within the town, and by providing event identifiers (swag bags), we increased the visibility of Culture Days and contributed a positive image to the initiative. The community remains supportive of Culture Days and we are encouraged to see the initiative grow across Canada, locally and nationally.”

SC: Any other comments you want to make about Culture Days?

Jennifer: “The Town of Kindersley has been involved in Culture Days since the beginning. Each year since 2010, we have seen attendance increase, as well as the awareness of this national initiative. Annually, the Town aims to involve the diverse local arts and cultural programming groups in the activities and events offered, as a means to promote growth in this sector beyond the dates of Culture Days.”

PREVIOUS PAGE: Jennifer Metherel-Potter speaks to race participants at the closing awards ceremony of the 'Amazing Race: K-Town Edition'*. PHOTO CREDIT: Kendra Kirtzinger.

* The 'Amazing Race: K-Town Edition' is not affiliated with CTV or anyone involved in the creation of *The Amazing Race*™.

The Town of Kindersley has been nominated in the category of Innovative Event at the National Culture Days Congress Awards that will be held in Winnipeg on May 23, 2014. Their unique way of engaging their community through an interactive race that provides opportunities to try out different cultural activities in a fun, competitive environment truly embodies the spirit of Culture Days.

It's a great way to celebrate the arts, culture and heritage organizations that are working in their community year round!



BUILD INTEREST.
In 2012, hundreds of children had the opportunity to try out musical instruments at the Mini-BreakOut West event, which received funding for Culture Days.

MAKE THINGS HAPPEN!
Funding available from the
Culture Days Funding Assistance Grant
Supports interactive cultural hubs, projects and activities taking place the last weekend of September during Culture Days in Saskatchewan.
Deadline: April 15

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Entertainment, eating, education and engagement create recipe for success at

Folkfest's Indian & Métis Pavilion

BY PAUL SPASOFF

Every year, people in Saskatoon travel around the world learning about different cultures – only to find out what they have in their own backyard.

Since 1980, Saskatoon Folkfest has been educating visitors about the different cultures in the Saskatoon area for three days every year, highlighting their heritage and traditions. For nearly that entire time, the Indian & Métis Pavilion has been a constant presence at the annual festival.

“The second year Folkfest started, the Friendship Centre joined to provide a pavilion,” explains Bill Mintram, executive director, Saskatoon Indian & Métis Friendship Centre, which still oversees the pavilion. “It’s important to our community. It’s an opportunity to provide education and awareness of who we are as an Aboriginal community.”

For Mintram and his strong contingent of Friendship Centre staff and volunteers, planning for the pavilion begins in January and continues until the beginning of the event in August. Additional assistance is provided by SaskCulture’s Métis Cultural Development Fund, which funds activities that preserve, strengthen and advance



Métis culture and traditions in the province. SaskCulture has been supporting the Indian & Métis Pavilion since 2009.

By the time the event rolls around, the planning pays off for the approximately 6,500 people who visit the pavilion every year.

The festivities include heaping helpings of entertainment and eating. The entertainment options include square dancing, Métis fiddle music, powwow dancing, drumming and hoop dancing, while the menu includes such favourites as bannock, bison burgers and smokies, smoked fish and other traditional foods.

“We have some people that say they make an effort to come to this pavilion every year because they love the bannock,” Mintram says. “We have people that say the same thing about the entertainment. It’s something that the community really enjoys and benefits from.”

However, organizers are careful to ensure the pavilion goes beyond just food and festivities. To that end, it also provides an opportunity to educate visitors. A variety of items with historical and cultural relevance to the Aboriginal community are on display – including beaver skins and other pelts, as well as intricate bead work. A full-size teepee is also constructed outside the Friendship Centre. Interpreters use these items and others as a launching

point to engage Folkfest attendees in a discussion about Aboriginal history.

While the entertainment and eating often receive the most attention, the key to the longevity of the Indian & Métis Pavilion also includes equal portions of education and engagement – especially with the majority of visitors being non-Aboriginal.

“As people are coming in the doors, they’re not expecting simply to be entertained, but they’re coming in wanting to learn more about what we do and who we are in the community,” Mintram suggests. “It gives us an opportunity to entertain them, as well as engage them in learning through dialogue and through taking part in workshops and opportunities to dance. We’re engaging people in many different ways.

“For one person, learning to dance might be an excellent opportunity that they’ll never forget. For another person, it might be talking about history to one of the interpreters. For another one, it may be learning about teepee teachings that will stick with them and really give them that ability to better understand who we are and to better understand our culture and our history.”



A strong contingent of volunteers and staff members host the Indian and Métis Pavilion at Folkfest each year. PREVIOUS PAGE: Zoe Roy. TOP LEFT: Strongarm Family’s Calling Bear Dance Troupe posing for photos. TOP RIGHT: Princess Alexandra Hoop Dance Troupe members. MIDDLE: Nefertiti Roesler. BOTTOM: Xavier Fisher.

Memory boxes and art engage seniors

BY SHAUNNA GRANDISH



For several months in late 2013, about 20 senior citizens from the Regina-area have been creating memory boxes and paintings based on their own personal stories and narratives — many of which haven't been shared with others in many years.

Common Weal's Artist-in-Resident Chrystene Ells initiated the project after she and Gerry Ruecker, artistic director, Common Weal, had a conversation about their personal experiences with elderly family members in care facilities. What struck both of them through their own observations was how terminally bored the seniors were with bingo and TV, which were highlights of their day, even though the seniors still have full capacity and mental abilities.

Occasionally, various groups would come and perform for them; however, what Ells and Ruecker noticed was a lack of activities that engaged the seniors beyond someone singing or talking at them. As a result, the idea of the creation of memory boxes was conceived and ready to be fully realized thanks to Common Weal receiving a Creative Partnerships Exploration Grant from the Saskatchewan Arts Board, with funding from SaskCulture/Saskatchewan Lotteries, for the project.

Once a week, Ells met with senior groups at the Regina Senior Citizens Centre and at the Al Ritchie Health Action Centre. Many of the seniors at the facilities greeted Ells with excitement and were eager to start sharing their personal stories.

"There was a lot of laughter, and some tears too," says Ells. "Some people were bringing out some really important stories in their lives. Some were doing boxes about people they've lost. Some couldn't stick with one box. There were several people who were making two or three boxes because there was so much they wanted to say. This was an important opportunity for them to share their stories."

According to Ells, some residents were a bit intimidated with the project at first, but eventually they jumped right in with the others — using their hands to build their stories.

Ruecker suggests that a component of the project was to give value to the participants' lives and experiences.

"We tend to underestimate their stories and what they've lived through, and I think this project is giving them a shot of self-esteem and value. They are going into things really deeply," he explains.

Ells adds that since seniors are facing the end of their lives, there was a certain urgency to this project. Since they have no time to waste, they get right to the heart of whatever it is they are dealing with.



Memory boxes depict important memories from a senior's life.

PREVIOUS PAGE: *World War II and A Love Story* by Shirley Whitlock.

ABOVE: (Left to Right): *Middle Life*; *The Early Years*; *Present Day*. All three memory boxes made by Frieda Beglan.

"It's a voice soon to be lost," she explains. "I think there's a lot of wisdom and understanding that we can gain from sitting with seniors as they want to be heard. Every project is just so touching."

The seniors' hard work culminated with an exhibition, titled *I remember when ...*, which was held at the Regina Senior Citizens Centre in December 2013. Thirty pieces were displayed along with write-ups from the artists that described the story or memory each piece was based on.

Frieda Beglan was one of the seniors who participated in the project and made three memory boxes, each representing a different phase of her life. She was so inspired by the work that she plans to begin writing her memoir early this year.

"This project took me far back in life and brought back memories I'd forgotten about," explains Beglan, while attending the exhibition. "It really woke me up. It made me think that I was alive and not gone," she adds with a small laugh.

Ells adds, "The seniors have said, 'it's my second childhood and I'm enjoying it more than my first.'"

Partnerships support arts and culture

The Saskatchewan Arts Board is pleased to partner with SaskCulture Inc. and Saskatchewan Lotteries on programs and initiatives that build a strong and vibrant arts and culture sector.

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SaskFestivals Gallery and Media Arts Organizations
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BUILD LEADERSHIP.

In 2012, youth in Cumberland House, SK, participated in a Media Arts & Traditional Storytelling Workshop, as part of a project supported by an Aboriginal Arts & Cultural Leadership Grant.



MAKE THINGS HAPPEN!

Funding available from the

Aboriginal Arts & Cultural Leadership Grant

Supports opportunities for First Nations and/or Métis youth to demonstrate leadership skills through cultural mentorships.

Deadlines: Oct. 15 & April 15



Visit www.saskculture.sk.ca for details.

Language festival promotes cultural pride

BY SARAH FERGUSON

“Love Your Language, Speak with Pride.”

This was the message bestowed on over 450 First Nations students at the province’s first-ever Indigenous Language Festival.

“It’s all about helping the students see the strength and the beauty of Indigenous culture,” says Jennifer Hingley, coordinator for First Nations and Métis

education, Saskatoon Public Schools. Held at City Park Collegiate in Saskatoon on October 29, 2012. The Festival catered to students from kindergarten through grade five, and focused on the Indigenous languages of Saskatchewan: Cree, Dakota, Nakawé or Sauteaux, and Métis.

The Festival, which received a SaskCulture Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Leadership Grant, was a collaborative effort between Saskatoon's Public Schools, Greater Saskatoon's Catholic Schools and the Saskatoon Tribal Council, explains Cornelia Laliberte, coordinator, First Nations and Métis Education, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools.

Language and culture is a high priority for all three institutions.

Lori McAuley, program coordinator, First Nations Students Success, for the Saskatoon Tribal Council, says, "The main theme of the festival was self-esteem. We wanted to celebrate and showcase our language and traditions to the students, so they could feel good about themselves."

Besides the celebration of language, Hingley says the festival addressed an important educational principle: learning together. "We wanted to do something for our urban students," she says. "[The festival was an opportunity] to bring rural First Nations students in to learn shoulder to shoulder with the urban students."

The festival featured puppets and storytelling, songs and singing, jigging, and powwow dancing. It also featured elders sharing stories, sash weaving, a syllabics session, and discussions about First Nations history.

"Our elders sat at the front of the stage and they were beaming," says McAuley. "They said this type of event needs to happen all the time."

According to Albert Scott, language and culture coordinator, Saskatoon Education



Unit, Saskatoon Tribal Council, the festival is for the children. "We want to get them away from the gangs and negative influences that are out there," he adds. "It's all about breaking barriers down and uniting everyone for the benefit of the community's children."

Hingley adds that we need to celebrate our Indigenous languages. "While they have been marginalized and [First Nations people] suffer from things such as systemic racism and underfunding, we still value our language, and can make it part of who we are in the contemporary world," Hingley explains.

Scott claims that, funding pending, big plans are in the works for this coming year.

"The organization that advises the chiefs and tribal council has set a date in February, 2014, for our second annual language festival," he says.

"This year's theme is 'sharing our traditional language'." The plan is for the 2014 festival to be held at E.D. Feehan Catholic High School, and will focus on grades three to five.

PREVIOUS PAGE: The drum group from Confederation Park Community School performs during the festival's grand entry. **ABOVE:** Albert Scott, language and culture coordinator, Saskatoon Education Unit, Saskatoon Tribal Council, works with a student. **PHOTO CREDIT:** Rob Kunz/Saskatoon Public Schools



Multiculturalism from north to south

BY DANICA LORER



Multiculturalism is a cause for celebration. Two Saskatchewan communities were among those hosting multicultural gatherings as part of Culture Days in September: Tapestrama has been part of the cultural fabric of Prince Albert for almost 40 years, while the Collage Cultural Festival is a relatively new event in Estevan.

The Prince Albert Multicultural Council began as a cultural dance group 50 years ago. In 1976, when the Council started Tapestrama, it began as an ethnic dinner and it has continued to grow over the years.

"Prince Albert is a bridge for the northern region of Saskatchewan. Tapestrama brings in people from the north to join the cultural activities. It's a positive way to bring people from all nations together,"

says Xiaofeng Zhang, assistant executive director, Prince Albert Multicultural Council. "It really fits our mission, it brings together ethnic, religious and cultural groups." The Council offers cultural events including a concert series, as well as settlement support services, English for employment classes and community consultations.

According to organizers, one of Tapestrama's greatest challenges is

increasing attendance numbers. The festival has moved to the E.A. Rawlinson Centre for the Arts, and in 2013 attracted 1,800 guests over two days.

Further south in the province, the Collage Cultural Festival in Estevan was hosted in 2013 by Southeast Newcomer Services. The organization has been in Estevan since December of 2010, offering services to newcomers to Canada, which include access to information, referrals and other help. The Collage Cultural Festival was first hosted in 2010 by Southeast Enterprise. In 2011, organization of the event was taken over by the local chamber of commerce and was suspended in 2012. In 2013, Southeast Newcomer Services held Collage in conjunction with the Estevan Showcase Business Expo. The festival attracted approximately 1,250 people over three days.

Tapestrama and the Collage Cultural Festival both offer something for audience members of all ages and interests. Sights, sounds and tastes from around the world are crowd favourites. "Food booths are a popular way to taste the life from other cultures," says Melanie Mantei, information services advisor, Southeast Newcomer Services. Some of the groups serving food are involved with local restaurants. The dishes served at the festival are special and not normally found on the menus.

Mantei appreciates the popularity of the festival, the gratitude of the guests and the enthusiasm of the volunteers. The future looks positive for the Collage Cultural Festival. "Our community is



getting so diverse, it will be something that will be an important part of Estevan and our region," she says.

Zhang describes the importance of Tapestrama in the community of Prince Albert. She says there is a blueprint for longevity in these types of events. "There's a warm feeling of welcoming and sharing. That's a very important thing," she says. "It's not about the dance ... it's not about the food ... it's about relationships. Sharing is what culture is all about, so people can learn to respect each other and learn each other's cultures."



PREVIOUS PAGE TOP LEFT: Japanese exchange student performs at Tapestrama. PREVIOUS PAGE BOTTOM LEFT: Alicia Balicki performs hoop dance for Tapestrama crowd. PREVIOUS PAGE RIGHT: African group with Prince Albert Multicultural Council staff and volunteers. TOP: Getting the food ready for the crowds at Collage Cultural Festival. BOTTOM: Estevan Sikh Society performers get ready at the Collage Cultural Festival.

SHARE CULTURE.

Spring Free from Racism organizers received a Multicultural Initiatives Fund grant that enables them to showcase the diversity of cultural heritage living in their community.



MAKE THINGS HAPPEN!

Funding available from the
Multicultural Initiatives Fund

Supports cultural activities, events or projects designed to enhance multicultural, ethno-cultural or cross-cultural awareness and participation.

Deadline: Jan. 31 for annual and project funding




Visit www.saskculture.sk.ca for details.

Popular touring workshop engages artists and Saskatchewan students

BY MICHELLE BROWNRIDGE



TOP: (Left to Right) The 2013 SCES Workshop Tour Artists: Janine Windolph, Dawn Bird, Bamswesigye Evans, Kelly-Anne Riess and Tyler Gilbert in Montmartre. MIDDLE: (Left to Right) Tyler Gilbert, Dawn Bird and Janine Windolph in Tisdale. BOTTOM: Tyler Gilbert and Dawn Bird taking a break during the Workshop Tour.

Every fall, for nearly 30 years, a troupe of Saskatchewan artists has jumped aboard a van and hit the road to provide arts workshops to students in schools all across the province thanks to the support and direction of the Saskatchewan Cultural Exchange Society (SCES).

The Workshop Tour Program, organized by the SCES, hires artists from all disciplines, including visual arts, music, dance and drama, to travel around the province to schools and provide instruction to students in their areas of expertise. In 2013, the artists hired were Tyler Gilbert - a musician, Dawn Bird - an actor, Bamswesigye Evans - a dancer, Janine Windolph - an interdisciplinary artist, as well as tour manager and poet Kelly-Anne Riess.

"The Workshop Tour Program is a great way to help schools get the arts into their curriculum," says Janine Windolph. "For some schools, arts appreciation is an important foundation, but for others the SCES Workshop Tour is one of the only ways that students get exposure to professional artists and arts activities."

Tyler Gilbert explains, "The first week was mostly up in Northern Saskatchewan, so we would be travelling and staying in hotels, but as the tour progressed and we moved back down south. Sometimes we would also be making day trips."

Each artist conducted four, hour-long workshops per day, two in the morning and two in the afternoon. Gilbert explains how his workshop was all about song writing. He would talk a little about himself and what it is like being a musician in Saskatchewan, and then he would introduce the different parts that make up a song. Finally, the students would be encouraged to write a group song using the ideas developed throughout the

workshop. "The students really loved singing their group song," he says.

Margaret Fry, executive director, SCES, says, "It's very important to us that the tour reaches as much of Saskatchewan as possible and that includes the north." In 2013, the program visited 17 communities, including Canoe Narrows, Pinehouse and Sandy Bay in Northern Saskatchewan.

Sandy Bay was a particularly inspiring place for Gilbert. "Right after the workshop a group of students returned on their recess break to talk to me about music and being a Saskatchewan musician," he shares. "I could really see the inspiration within them. It reminded me of the inspiration I had myself as a young student who was eager to start a career in music."

Dawn Bird learned first-hand from the tour that even a brief experience with the arts can be a powerful and transformative experience for students. "After one of my sessions, I had a teacher come up to me with tears in her eyes to tell me about one of the students who had experienced a lot of trauma in his life. These traumatic experiences had caused him to close up and become, for the most part, unresponsive. She was amazed that he had willingly participated in my workshop. She felt it may have opened a door towards his recovery and a personal connection with the world around him. Hearing this brought tears to my eyes!"

Having the opportunity to teach such a large number of workshops to such diverse groups of students was also a great learning opportunity for the artists. According to Windolph, "The Workshop Tour Program allowed me to hone my teaching skills and after each class was done I would assess how things went and apply the things I learned to the next class. This allowed me to become a stronger, wiser arts educator."

She adds, "For me, each day was a chance to interact with the next generation and hopefully inspire them to consider the arts as a career, and if not that, at least encourage them to appreciate the power of creativity."

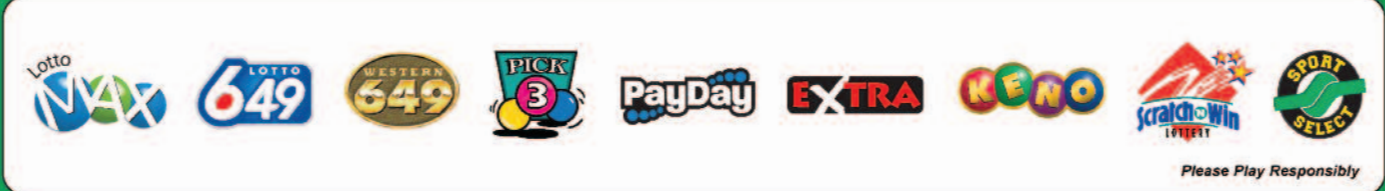
The SCES and the Workshop Tour Program is supported with funding from the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation.

For more information about the SCES visit www.culturalexchange.ca or find them on Twitter at @theExchangeLive.



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Claire Xue expresses her creativity at Tapestrama in Prince Albert.
Photo courtesy from the Prince Albert Multicultural Council.



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