

Synergy

The newsletter of Lake of the Woods Arts Collective

Volume 2; Issue 3; Dec. 2009



Inspiring unity, joy and opportunity through the arts

De-stressing a season, perhaps a community

By Elsie Neufeld
Vice Chair/Newsletter editor

"I'm not an artist," said George, as he shifted the reindeer in his Christmas display a meter to the left, took two paces back and assessed the effect.

Sure George may not qualify for a Canada Council Grant, but at this time of year, setting up his Christmas display, he is an artist.

We all know someone like George. Their canvasses are front yards, gift wrappings, trees, dining room tables, food, wreaths, you name it. They would never think of themselves as artists, or even as being creative. Yet, at this time of year, as we drive along streets at night, visit homes, and attend events, we are surrounded by their creativity, the exuberance of Christmas artists.

People have any number of reasons closet artists emerge at this time, to light up the darkness, celebrate the season, and yes,

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compete with the neighbours. Who cares as long as it gets people off the couch and into creating. Creating, being an artist, is good for observers, but it is also very healthy for the artist.

Did you know that creativity is a stress reliever? (And heaven knows, we need all the stress relief we can get this time of year.)

According to experts, creativity in all its forms, such as painting, decorating, gardening, writing, sewing, knitting, dancing, and singing, relieves stress and makes a person feel good about themselves and their lives.

The act of being creative is a distraction, it takes your mind off what's stressing you. Being completely engaged in something creative has the same benefits as meditation, and spending time with your hobby gives you the goodness of a balanced life.

LOWAC members know about the joy of creating, that's why we want to nurture and support the Lake of the Woods arts community. If our first year and plans for our second are any indication, we are doing it. We had our annual general meeting in October and were pleased to have over 20 people attending. AGMs are traditionally boring, but not with this group.

First of all, age groups from students to seniors were represented. Second, ideas flew fast and furious, and the dry business of having a meeting was enhanced with imagination and enthusiasm. We have momentum. We are going with it.

LOWAC is now over 100 members strong, and growing. We hosted, participated, and sponsored probably a dozen events this past year and have even more planned this coming year. We have become the go-to organization when someone has an arts idea. You can't imagine how many ideas are out there, a juried show, partnered events, and successful events of 2009 like the Artist Studio Tour and the Coney Island Music Festival.

As well, individual artists are taking things into their own hands and making art possibilities happen for everyone because they have a need or an idea. Lynn Korella and friends have started a Thursday

afternoon art space where people can gather for informal creative time. (See Page 4 for details.)

Art shows, music festivals, writers' festival, these are all being discussed and many have moved beyond the discussion phase and are now in motion.

LOWAC is tapping into the artistic energy, and attempting to satisfy what is apparently a huge arts-oriented need in our community.

In our second year of existence, we will continue to follow our mission: *Inspiring unity, joy and opportunity through the arts*. We will support and nurture all artists, established artists, young artists, and seasonal artists like George.

Heck, we hope to de-stress our entire community through the arts.



Merry Christmas and may the arts light up your life in 2010.

Synergy

is the newsletter of the Lake of the Woods Arts Collective.

Please send submissions to Elsie Neufeld by email at eneufeld@kmts.ca. For more information either email, or phone her at 548-8455.

Synergy reserves the right to edit articles for length, grammar, etc.

Synergy: Increased effectiveness,

Contact Us



The LOWAC Executive

Co-chairs:

Lee Ann Hawkins

Email: hawk@kmts.ca

Kim Kahoot Ratuski

Email: kratuski@hotmail.com

Vice-chair & Newsletter Editor:

Elsie Neufeld

Email: eneufeld@kmts.ca

Secretary:

Holly Friesen

Email: holly_friesen@hotmail.com

Treasurer:

Liz Visser

PR/ Events:

Cory McCrindle

Email: nexcorey@live.ca

Membership:

Patrick Lessard

Email: fossil@kmts.ca

Mailing Address

LOWAC

P.O. Box 10002

Harbour Postal Outlet

Kenora ON P9N 1T4

Membership:

Member - \$50

Student/Seniors - \$25

Member-at-Large - \$25

Institutional - \$100

Educational/Non-profit - \$50

Art Partners News

Rotary Bench Project

The Art Partners Rotary Bench Project is complete! Six vibrant cedar benches will be on display beginning the afternoon of Monday November 30th at the Kenora Recreation Centre.

The benches will be in the hallway between the aquatic centre and the stairs, in the same location that Art Partners paintings are displayed. We invite you to join us between 1pm and 2pm at the Rec Centre on Nov 30th to celebrate this community project. The benches will be gifted to six community locations in December.

2010 Art Partners Calendar

The 2010 Art Partners calendar has arrived. The paper quality is better this year and we've included the names of the artists as requested by many last year. My apologies to Kay White, whose name is missing from February's Big Red. We didn't order quite as many this year, so be sure to let us know soon if you'd like to purchase any.

Festival of Trees

As many of you know we gathered on November 26th to create Christmas tree ornaments for the Festival of Trees. The tree includes photos of our tree decorating participants as a child at Christmas and their recorded Christmas stories.

Check out the finished product at the Festival of Trees at the museum from Dec 3-5. A schedule of the event is located at <http://www.kenora.ca/museum/Events/>

[events.aspx?id=1660](http://www.kenora.ca/museum/Events/).

*Kristen Bailey and Shauna DeGagne
Community Consultants*

*Community Arts Hub - Art Partners
Kenora Association for Community Living
(807) 467-5262*

A meaningful and satisfying life for all.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

If you have renewed your membership or bought a new one recently, your membership card is ready and can be picked up at Fragile Glass Studio (The Belfry) 329 Third Avenue South Kenora.

Ten benefits of LOWAC membership

LOWAC would like to see Kenora become an arts city, connecting artists with artists and the community at large with those artists.

To do this, we need your support. Whether you are an artist, a patron of the arts, or someone who wants to support our community with this initiative, please consider becoming a member. Contact Patrick Lessard at fossil@kmts.ca for more membership information.

TEN benefits of MEMBERSHIP:

1. Your annual membership brings opportunities within the arts, and it also brings you some great savings at arts supply stores.
2. Access to our billboard and our website, to showcase your work, your profile and your event.
3. Discounts on workshops offered by LOWAC.
4. Access to FREE education and PD through Community Arts Heritage and Education Project-Thunder Bay.
5. Inclusion into a variety of planned multi-arts events and festivals throughout the year.
6. A stronger voice for Arts in the city—a seat at the City table re: arts space, needs of the arts community.
7. Opportunity to take arts tours with others: i.e. Gimli Wave Tour, Dryden Miniatures show.
8. Use of our events tent, when available.
9. A free table at the Farmer's Market.
10. Fun, fellowship, and a great excuse to play!

Business, celebration, networking

Photos by Cory McCrindle

Right: Marielle Benson and Susie Brown look over some of the members work during the social time after the meeting.



Above: Co-chairs, Kim Kahoot and Lee Ann Hawkins, cut LOWAC's first anniversary cake.



Above: Angela Gibson and Kris Goold take an opportunity to share information and ideas.



Over 20 participants gathered at the St. Thomas Aquinas High School library for LOWAC's AGM



Left: Patrick Lessard, LOWAC membership chair, signs up a new member. LOWAC now has over 100 members. Three new board members were voted onto the board at the AGM, Patrick as Membership Chair, Liz Visser as Treasurer, and Darcie Buchanan as Appreciation Chair.

Wildlife “custodian” Lil Anderson launches a new book

Local biologist and writer Lil Anderson launched her new publication, *Pond Memories: More Tales from a Wildlife Rehabilitator*, Nov. 24, with a reading and book signing at the Lake of the Woods Museum.

This is Lil's second publication. Her first book about life with wildlife was the popular *Beavers Eh to Bea*.

Lil spends every minute she can outdoors. When she is not working as a fish and wildlife technician for Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources, she and her husband Bruce Ranta rehabilitate woodland creatures on their Kenrora area property, known as Iggy's Wildlife Rehab Centre.

The book description from Turnstone

Press, the books publisher says:

“Wildlife rehabilitators, or wildlife custodians, as we are now called in Ontario, often do not have the opportunity to monitor the lives of their wards once they have been released to the wild. Sometimes that may be just as well, as even youngsters raised by their natural mothers often do not survive the first year of their lives or, for that matter, the first few months.” So writes Lil Anderson, author of *Pond Memories*. Lil is well known in the Lake of the Woods area for her extensive wildlife rehabilitation work and in *Pond Memories* she recounts her experiences nurturing the creatures that people less skilled bring to her. Much of the action focuses on the antics of the menagerie in and around the pond on

her property. (Originally dug for a young beaver named Eh.) Lil learns to cope with Brownie, a young bull moose who came to her half-drowned and suffering from pneumonia, and whose appetite for clay, squashed caterpillars, and rotting aquatic vegetation made Lil's stomach curdle. Lil also raises a kit vixen fox, who one day happily leaves the makeshift den Lil had built, but not before retrieving a stuffed toy she slept with. And no tale of animal rehab would be complete with the appearance of a new beaver kit called Cameron. Readers will enjoy the heart-warming story of Lil's life with creatures big and small, a life full of trials, triumphs, and heartbreak. This glimpse at the ways of Canadian wildlife reveals they are different from us, but not so much as we often imagine.

Festival of Trees **LOWAC's entry** *under* **construction**



You'll just have to visit Festival of Trees to see the final product. Lake of the Woods Museum, Dec. 3 - 5.

Photos by Cory McCrindle

Art for Fun **makes art** **a group** **experience**

In October, a new art experience, *Art For Fun*, was born.

Initiated by a group of LOWAC members, Art for Fun is just that, an opportunity to get together with other artists and have fun doing art.

“Our goal is to create an atmosphere of comfort and fun doing our ‘own thing’ once a week. Having a good time with others who share the same interest, and having something to look forward to once a week, is great,” Lynn Korella explained in her email.

“Some of us come with our watercolour paints and paper. Others like to sketch! I am looking forward to some collage experiences. A gal came one week with her pencil crayons. If you like to embroidery come and bring it,” she wrote.

Anyone interested is welcome to join the group on Thursdays 1 p.m.– 4 p.m. First visit is free. A membership costs \$15 for the year. They meet at the Rotary Room next door to the Seniors Centre in the Recreation Centre. Easy parking and walking, no stairs to climb. Refreshments can be bought at the Seniors Centre.

For more information, drop in any Thursday or email Lynn Korella at korella@kmts.ca or Marielle Benson at mariellebenson@kmts.ca. Lynn would also like to hear from you if you can't attend due to the time and day.



Capturing a heartfelt moment a thrill for LOWAC member

Article and photos by Cory McCrindle

They made monumental, life-changing decisions. All I had to do was make a small one. And unlike their decisions, mine was pretty much black and white. Recently, the Lake of the Woods Museum was the venue for an exhibit called "Of Love and War." It was a display of Lake of the Woods Arts Collective member's artwork, inspired by the stories of people who moved to our area and married Canadians following World War Two. I wanted to somehow contribute to the display, but because my field is photography, I wasn't quite sure exactly how to go about doing so. After discussing things with Museum Director Lori Nelson, I decided to take pictures of the artists involved and the War Brides with which they were matched at the opening night event. I thought about how best to approach the shoot, and knew I wanted to get the Brides and artists interacting as much as possible and try to view it like I would if I were doing a news shoot. The first image that jumped into my brain when I was thinking about the project ahead was the famous Life Magazine photo by Alfred Eisenstaedt. It shows a sailor kissing a woman in Times Square in New York City in 1945. To me it has always represented a celebration of the end of war and of the hopeful new lives that might lie ahead for that couple.

On the night of the gala at the Museum, I decided I was going to shoot in black and white. I reasoned that it might suit the subject matter better than what colour could. Once there, I went about trying to drink in all I could about the display and search out the "moments" that photographers strive to capture. I was not disappointed. The artwork was wonderful. The brides were captivating. Their stories were nothing short of inspiring, and the artists did a fantastic job interpreting them as artwork.

Personalities shone, and the night was full of laughter and warm memories. Meanwhile, I ran around trying to capture those previously-mentioned moments. My favourite was when Betty and Jim Colfer, a war bride and her groom, posed for me in front of a Marielle Benson painting that depicted them kissing when they were young. And although so many years had passed since that moment, they agreed to let life imitate art. Jim took his War Bride in his arms and gave her a kiss.

Later, when I saw what I had taken, I got chills. I had managed to capture something that had stood the test of time. A love that began many decades earlier was still going strong. And for me, that's what brought home the significance of the stories these women shared. Despite the odds, despite having to leave their homes for a far away country and start a life with men they really did not – and realistically could not - know all that well, love grew... and survived! I got another thrill sometime later when my pictures became part of the

exhibit. Lori Nelson's sister Patty put together a beautiful DVD "slide show" of the photos set to music. Each participating artist and war bride was given a copy. What an honour to be part of the event and to know that your pictures will in some way become part of their memories of the Of Love and War exhibit. I don't know what Alfred Eisenstaedt felt seeing his photo on the cover of Life, but I have a tremendous feeling of satisfaction having been part of this show...and capturing with my camera my own version of a timeless kiss!



Rick Brignall launches two books this fall

Local journalist and author Richard Brignall launched two books this fall, *Big Train: The Legendary Ironman of Sport*, *Lionel Conacher*, and *Fearless: The Story of George Chuvalo, Canada's Greatest Boxer*, both published by James Lorimer & Company Ltd.

Richard is probably best known in Kenora for his first book, *Small Town Glory*, the story about the Kenora Thistles winning the Stanley Cup, which he coauthored with John Danakas.

Richard, a former sports reporter, for the Kenora Daily Miner and News, continues to reflect his passion for sports in his new books.

Big Train tells the story of Lionel Conacher. Conacher excelled at football,

hockey, baseball, boxing, wrestling, and lacrosse. He taught himself how to play and he worked hard, and it paid off. He supported his struggling family, never giving up or letting people down.

He was given the nickname "Big Train" because he was unstoppable on the football field when he ran through the opposition. In 1921 Conacher joined the Toronto Argonauts, and in 1926 he played professional baseball for the Toronto Maple Leafs. After retiring from sports, Conacher was elected to the Canadian House of Commons in 1949.

His other new book is *Fearless: The Story of George Chuvalo, Canada's Greatest Boxer*

George Chuvalo only wanted one thing:

to become a boxer. When Chuvalo stepped into the ring, he was fearless. In ninety-three professional fights between 1956 and 1979, boxing everyone from George Foreman to Muhammad Ali, he was never once knocked out. But this heavyweight boxing legend never had it easy.

After losing many loved ones to drugs, Chuvalo has also become a role model out of the ring by speaking out and fighting against addiction.

Richard's other book is *Forever Champions* about the Edmonton Grads women's basket ball team

Richard has written for such publications as Cottage Life and Outdoor Canada. The Lake of the Woods Area News regularly features his cottage maintenance articles.

LOWAC's Website up and active

See our new website, www.lowac.ca.
Check out our members' pages,
browse their art, and see our past
events. Our meetings and workshops
are listed there too, on the calendar.

Find us on Facebook

Lake of the Woods Arts Collective
events are now posted on Facebook.

Check out all the discussions, events
and upcoming meeting dates on our
page!

How to do this:

1. Sign into Facebook (you must
have your own account)
2. Go to their search engine.
3. Type in "Lake of the Woods Arts
Collective".
4. Go to the Discussion Board, and
if you wish, let us know what
you think, what you are doing,
send us your pictures and your
event poster JPGs....

Starving Artists' Fund provides memberships

LOWAC's Starving Artist Fund is for
those whose budgets will not allow
\$50 annual fees/\$25 for students.

Those interested in applying for
this fund are asked to provide us
with proof of need in a letter of
request. This is a personal statement
of why you may not be able to
afford to join LOWAC.

All requests are confidential. Please
include contact information.

Submit your statement to :
LOWAC: Starving Artists Fund,
Harbour Postal Outlet,
PO BOX 10002,
Kenora, ON, P9N 1T4 or e-mail
kdkahoot@gmail.com

Stepping Out

A Calendar of Arts Events



December 1 - 5 — Hay Fever

Hay Fever is a comedy by Noel Coward, involving 9 characters. Showtime is 8:00 p.m. at the First Baptist Church at 510 Second Street South. Advance tickets are available at Lake of the Woods Museum, Tuesday to Saturday from 10:00 a.m. till 5:00 p.m.

December 3 - 5 — Festival of Trees

6th Annual Festival of Trees - charity fundraiser for the Lake of the Woods Community Foundation - features decorated Christmas Trees on display at Lake of the Woods Museum December 3 -5. These trees will be auctioned off to raise funds for the Lake of the Woods Community Foundation's support of community endeavours.

December 14 — LOW Museum and G Clef Choir.

The Lake of the Woods Museum closes out the year with its annual Christmas Open House. Everyone is invited to browse through the exhibits while enjoying a cup of hot apple cider and a sample of shortbread and gingerbread. Then, really get into the spirit of Christmas by enjoying the music of the G Clef Choir. They'll start singing at about 7:30 p.m.

December 15 — Beaver Brae Christmas Concert

Beaver Brae Secondary School will host a Christmas concert starting at 7 pm.

December 24 - 26 — Ice Candle Festival of Lights

Over 5,000 ice candles light up the Lake of the Woods Cemetery, 750 9th St. N., in memory of lost loved ones.

January 16 — Wayne Kelso

The Kenora Concert Series presents the fantastic musical stylings of Wayne Kelso. Concert starts at 8:00 pm at Knox United Church

First Tuesday of every month — LOWAC Visual Artists

On the first Tuesday of every month the Visual Artists Committee of LOWAC meet at Lakewood School. Contact Irene McCuaig at mccuaig@kmts.ca for more details.

Every Tuesday — Pipes and Drums

Kenora Scottish Pipes and Drums meet every Tuesday at the Keewatin Legion, 7 p.m. upstairs. Lessons available.

Every Wednesday night — Jam at the Cornerstone

There's a Jam at the Cornerstone with David Caissy, Wayne Kelso and Darcy Ura. The House band is called Third Groove. Wednesdays 8 - 10 p.m. at the Cornerstone No Cover All Ages All Welcome at 8:00 pm

Every Thursday — Art for Fun

Artists gather from 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. at the Rotary Room, Kenora Recreation Centre, to do art together. Bring your project, and enjoy art with a group. For more information contact Lynn Korella at korella@kmts.ca.

Every Thursday night — Unplugged at HoJoe

Musicians jam in the cozy atmosphere of HoJoe Cafe every Thursday 6 p.m. - close.