

LOWAC continues to expand programs

By Irene McCuaig

It's been another busy year for LOWAC, its members and its Board of Directors.

In carrying out our mandate of promoting unity, joy and opportunity through the arts, we have maintained some of our existing programs and added a few more.

Events that have been carried on from previous years include the 2x2 outdoor art exhibit, the Coney Island Music Festival (Chinese auction, 2x2 sales, facepainting, sand castle competition, busking, Redditt Circus Kids), the Festival of Trees (our tree brought in the second-highest bid this year), the Open Studio Tour, financial support for our writers' workshops, a contribution of art supplies for the Miracle Marathon, Fun Mondays, our newsletter (Synergy), our webpage (lowac.ca), and our signboard on the Tilley corner.

This year, we finalized arrangements with the Paterson Medical Centre and now have local artwork displayed in that site. We sponsored the Snow Sculpture competition during winter carnival, providing organizational expertise and prize money.

We promoted LOWAC with display tables at LOWPOA in Winnipeg, the Home and Leisure Show in Kenora, the Agricultural Fair, Celebrate Summer, and Culture Days.

We have been invited, by the Ontario Craft Council, to share LOWAC's story with other arts communities in Manitoulin Island and Fort Frances. Jude Ortiz has also asked for our participation in the development

of a slideshow to promote craft artistry in Northern Ontario.

We have continued to develop community partnerships with Lake of the Woods Centre for the Arts, the city's cultural planners, the Paterson Medical Centre, Kenora Tourism, Lake of the Woods Museum, Firefly and Womens' Place.

A recent addition to our activities is the development of art classes for kids (10 to 14 year olds) which have been well received by the community. Potential

exists for expanding our programming to adults and younger children. We applied for and received funding through the Community Foundation to continue art programming into 2012.

Additions to our assets include a big-screen TV, a laptop, 3 folding tables and a First Aid kit.

The Board has spent considerable time this year dealing with the incorporation issue. We strongly feel that, in order to move forward, LOWAC has reached the

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Kenora and Lake of the Woods Regional Community Foundation helps out



Betty Wires (left), LOWAC co-chair, happily accepted a cheque from Meg Cameron, Kenora & Lake of the Woods Regional Community Foundation director. The foundation granted \$2000 to LOWAC to help us fund our art classes for 10 to 14 year olds. The schedule for January to May 2012 will now be finalized, so keep an eye on www.lowac.ca for details. Thank you, Community Foundation, for enabling us to continue these art opportunities for our young people.

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Synergy

is the newsletter of the Lake of the Woods Arts Collective (LOWAC).

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, achievement, etc., produced by combined action, co-operation, etc.

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Visual Arts Update

Christmas focuses on Festival of Trees entry

By Laurie Dufresne

Festival of Trees

This year's theme for the Festival of Trees is *Christmas at the Lake*.

LOWAC has formed a committee of six people who have put together a great plan of action and ornament design for our entry in the Festival.

Members of LOWAC are invited to join in to make the ornament on two Fun Monday sessions, Nov. 21 and 28.

These sessions will be held at 1736 Railway St. (next door to Image One Designs).

No charge to attend as the ornaments are being made for tree auction.

No experience required! Very skilled designers will be there to assist everyone.

Assembly of the LOWAC tree is scheduled for Wednesday, November 30. Viewing of exhibit is as follows:



LOWAC expanding...

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point where incorporation is necessary. We would like, in the future, to hire an employee to take the load off the shoulders of our volunteers. We need to be incorporated to apply for funding through the Ministry of Culture. We all feel that the financial requirements of incorporation will be a good thing for LOWAC and will provide transparency so our members can understand our decisions and spending.

Unfortunately, our name, LOWAC, is too similar to LOWCA (Lake of the Woods Centre for the Arts) to pass a NUANS search which is the first step in incorporation. LOWCA incorporated before us, although we existed first, which gives them the right to the name. This leaves the Board between a rock and a hard place. We explored the option of working with LOWCA but feel we are not yet ready

Seniors' Night – Thursday, December 1

Gala & Auction – Friday, December 2

Family Day – Saturday, December 3

Fun Mondays

Fun Mondays resumed on October 24 with a some changes.

Fun Mondays will now be held weekly. Each week will be at a new venue and with a different host. This is a great opportunity to learn a new technique, craft or medium. Whether you consider yourself a novice or accomplished artist, all skill levels are more than welcome. Our group is a great resource with so many talented people with so much to share!

The schedule for December is as follows:

December 5, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Christmas Soap – Folk Art Painting

835 15th Ave N – between Beaver Brae and Round Lake – Host: Laurie Dufresne

Cost: \$5.00

December 12, 7p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Print Making – ATC (Artist Trading Cards)

835 15th Ave N – between Beaver Brae and Round Lake – Host: Laurie Dufresne

Cost: \$5.00

2X2 for U

The theme for the 2012 exhibit is *Home*. Boards and guidelines are available for anyone wanting an early start. Contact Betty Wires (betty.wires@gmail.com) or Molly Stouffer - Molly Stouffer (molly.stouffer@shaw.ca)

to give up our autonomy. We will continue to look at amalgamation of the two groups in the future. We feel incorporation is necessary for LOWAC at this time but we cannot use the name LOWAC. We submitted the name Synergy: Lake of the Woods Arts Collective to a NUANS search it would allow us to retain the LOWAC brand. Unfortunately it too was rejected. There's another Synergy arts group in Ontario. We're open to suggestions.

The Board has also given considerable time and discussion to by-laws for the collective. We used, as a template, the by-laws of the Scugog Council for the Arts which was suggested to us by Marilyn McIntosh of OCA.

It has been a very busy year for the Directors...busy and productive. We look forward to helping the Arts flourish in Kenora through increased partnerships, programs and events in the future.

LOWAC spreads the word to other arts groups

LOWAC was invited to speak at two events sponsored by the Ontario Crafts Council (OCC) this fall as an initiative to improve support for artists and crafters throughout Northern Ontario. The first venue was via teleconference with the newly formed Manitolin Island arts group and the second held in Fort Frances with a group of artists interested in establishing a collective.

LOWAC board members, Irene McCuaig and Laurie Dufresne, spoke on the formation, organization and activities of our arts collective at each of these venues. They gave a presentation which was followed by a question period.

If you ever want to be impressed by a group, have a look at the Power Point presentation that formed the base of Irene and Laurie's address. Sometimes, when we get caught up in the present, we forget or overlook the impact of the past. To watch the slide show from LOWAC's inception to the present day is a reminder of how extraordinary and productive a group LOWAC is. Fort Frances thought so, too.

We were able to give them some pointers on how to get a collective started and keep it going. Both Laurie and Irene were impressed by the enthusiasm of the Fort Frances group.

As a result of that gathering, we were able to recommend the chairperson of the Fort Frances group as adjudicator for our own Festival of the Arts, visual arts section. Also, the Fort Frances

group has launched into organizing their own Snow Sculpture competition, using Laurie's expertise as a guideline. Jude Ortiz from the OCC has proven to be a valuable resource for us as we have consulted her in matters of contracts, etc. Meeting other artists from Northwestern Ontario is a major motivational event and we are grateful to the OCC for providing that opportunity. Laurie and Irene may have inspired Fort Frances but Fort Frances certainly inspired us. We look forward to working with Fort Frances more in the future.

Opportunities to make Kenora an arts centred city

We have vacant positions on the LOWAC board. This is a great opportunity for people to help make Kenora an arts centred city. And you'll have fun do it.

- Performing Arts Chair
- Visual Arts Chair
- Webmaster.

If you are interested in these positions, please contact Esme Boone at boone_1@sympatico.ca or Betty Wires at betty.wires@gmail.com

Have you renewed your membership?

2010-2011 memberships expired on Oct. 31, 2011. Please renew your membership and continue to support LOWAC in its mission: to inspire unity, joy and opportunity through the arts.

LAKE OF THE WOODS ARTS COLLECTIVE (LOWAC) MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

LOWAC, non profit group, aims to make Kenora an arts city, to connect artists with artists and the community at large, and to engage the community in the arts. To do this, we need your support. Whether you are an artist, a patron of the arts, or someone who wants to support this initiative, please consider becoming a member.

Membership offers:

- Participation in LOWAC events - Support to help access funding - Visibility as an artist through LOWAC
- Networking opportunities with artists and those involved in the arts community - Workshop and educational opportunities
- Information and notices on events/job opportunities - Inclusion in the Artist's Directory on the LOWAC website
- Discounts on art supplies at several art supply stores

Future benefits, as they become available, will include tangibles such as access to a LOWAC facility, school credits/scholarships and more...

Annual membership fee: \$25

Membership runs from Nov. 1 to Oct. 31.

To become a member, please make cheque out to: LOWAC

Mail to: LOWAC P.O. Box 10002 Harbour Postal Outlet Kenora ON P9N 4T1

Please print clearly.

Name: _____ Date _____

Name of Corporation/Organization: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Type of Artist/Discipline: _____

We will issue a receipt for your membership fee. Please include your mailing address so we can send you a membership package.

For further inquiries, contact Patrick Lessard at fossil@kmts.ca or website www.lowac.ca

Thank you for supporting LOWAC

Meet the LOWAC board 2011/12



Esmé Boone
Co-chair

Esmé studied art for three years full time at the National Art School in Sydney and Newcastle, Australia, before coming to Canada in 1970. Once in this country, she completed an honours degree in Fine Arts at the University of Manitoba, majoring in painting with second major in photography.

Esmé works mainly with acrylics on canvas. Esmé's other passion is the Celtic harp and accompanying herself singing Celtic and Gaelic songs. She runs harp-making workshops in which tiny lap harps are made. These workshops combine music and art, as the participants paint their own designs on the harp. "That way," she jokes, "they get an art lesson as well as a harp!"



Betty Wires
Co-chair

My art is stained glass and my current focus is fused glass. I joined LOWAC because it provides artists, such as myself to network with other artists in the community as well as to profile and celebrate our work.

I was also impressed by the energy and commitment that the board and volunteers exhibited to raise the profile of art and artists in Kenora.

My hope is that LOWAC can continue to exhibit the energy and commitment of previous boards and make art happen in Kenora.



Irene McCuaig
Secretary

Irene has created artwork since childhood and had her first one-person show at Sunset Gallery in 2006.

After graduating high school, she took teacher-training in Thunder Bay. She taught school for eight years before realizing she would rather study art. So she did.

Irene continued to share her interest in art by offering evening classes in drawing and watercolour/acrylic painting and teaching art at Lakewood school.

As a retired teacher, she plans on devoting a great deal of her time in the next few years to the development of the arts in Kenora.



Mike LeMaistre
Public Relations

Mike LeMaistre has spent most of his life in Kenora but has also experienced life in other cities such as Thunder Bay, Dryden, Winnipeg and Banff. While he is not the least bit musically inclined or artistic, he is a patron of the Arts and participates as much as he can. He has great faith in the future of Kenora and believes that Arts and Culture will play a significant role in that future. Mike is involved with numerous other volunteer organizations in Kenora and in such roles became acquainted with the work LOWAC was doing and wanted get involved. He looks forward to being a part of the LOWAC board.



Jeannine Degagne
Treasurer

I am a fashion designer who has always been fascinated with textiles, textures and their relationship with the female form. I design, manufacture and modify garments within the comfort of my home-based studio.

One of my most gratifying projects was breathing new life into a treasured men's suit. The assignment was to redesign a three piece men's suit into a tailored women's three piece skirt suit. The customer wanted to preserve her husband's first suit.

I became involved with LOWAC to share my skills and knowledge, and encourage others in the community to explore their talents and develop or learn a new skill. We have talented Canadian artists and artisans who need our representation and support.



Patrick Lessard
Membership Chair

I enjoy taking pictures of nature and landscapes. My photography led me to Harbourfest. Not only did I want to enjoy the festival, I wanted to bring more to it. This helped open my eyes to other things happening in the city.

LOWAC was one thing that really drew my attention, and I wanted to get more involved. I'm membership coordinator and have no regrets at all. It has been two years now and there is still a lot to do, but I'm enjoying doing the work and meeting creative people.

Wanting a more vibrant arts city, I am now also involved in the Centre for the Arts. Our goal is to create a building in Kenora which will house and promote all arts, and a venue for an audience to enjoy them.



Tara Douglas
Vice-chair

I consider myself an artist in the making. Trained in the law, I only started to explore my creative side in the last few years. I dabble in visual arts, glass and design. I became involved with LOWAC because I believe it is the people, and what they put their energies into, that define the heart of a community. I was inspired by and proud of the founders of LOWAC and wanted to contribute to their efforts in some way. I dream of Kenora becoming a siren for artists, inspiring people with its wild beauty, history and eclectic culture.



Andrew Ross
Music Co-chair



David Caissy
Music Co-chair



Elsie Neufeld
Newsletter Editor

The arts scene in a “cultural wasteland”

Coney Island Music Festival

On Sunday, July 24, it was hot and dry, a beautiful summer Sunday and on Coney Island the stage was rocking. The third (maybe) annual Coney Island Music Festival drew the largest crowd ever.

On the stage The Freaky Green Beetles, Pat Brett, Celtic Band MAC, Ryan Van Bellegham, Glen McCabe, The Cold Hard Facts of Life, and Big Boogaloo kept the tunes playing.

It was an afternoon in a summer paradise, with lots happening including a Chinese auction, 2x2 sales, facepainting, sand castle competition, busking and a visit by Redditt Circus Kids. About \$4,000 was raised for supporting LOWAC's youth programming.

Thanks to our volunteers and partners for making it happen.

In appreciation for making this music festival happen for the past three years, LOWAC presented Ferg, Kathy, Helena, and Clark Devins, Bill and Debbie Wallace, and Michael O'Flaherty with honorary lifetime LOWAC memberships.

It's hard to know how to repay such a great gift.

2x2 4 U Art Exhibit & Sale

LOWAC's 2x2 for U Art Exhibit & Sale wrapped up at the Coney Island Music Festival. This was our third annual exhibit and sale in Kenora area parks. The exhibit opened on June 24 and was located in McLeod and Memorial Parks for 31 days. This year's theme for the display was *Captured Moments*. Artist interpretations of this theme included whimsical, gardens, nature, views of our lakes and rivers and our city in a variety of mediums — photos, paintings, and glass pieces.

The exhibit was a great way to showcase area artists as well as being a fantastic fundraiser for LOWAC. By end of day on July 24th, five pieces of art had sold and \$1,207.50 was raised for LOWAC, thanks to the generous contributions from artists who donated 70 per cent of the sale proceeds to LOWAC.

Many thanks for participating artists, and our many supporters who helped with the display.



Bill and Debbie Wallace, Irene McCuaig of LOWAC, and Fergie Devins joyfully celebrate the results of the Coney Island Music Festival fundraising efforts. *Photo by Cory McCrindle*

2011 LOWAC Open Studio Tour

The Open Studio Tour, July 17 and 18, featured more than 20 local artists showcasing their works at their homes or studios.

This gives people a chance to look into the creative spaces of the artists. Many people take advantage of this opportunity. It generates inspiration for visiting artists and their children and gives the artists a sales opportunity.

The artists who opened their studio doors this year were: Marielle Benson (paintings), Nancy Bergman (Fabric artist), Esme Boone (harps/paintings), Susie Brown (photographs). David Caissy (music recording studio), Jeannine Degagné (fashions), Laurie E. Dufresne (paintings), Holly Ann Friesen (paintings), Kris Goold (pottery, glass work, jewellery), Leeann Hawkins (jewellery, mixed media, assemblage), Pippi Johnson (paintings/sketches). Kimberly Kahoot (art quilts, paintings, collages), Community Arts Hub (paintings, drawing, pottery, drumming, choral), Melissa Jean (oil & acrylic paintings). Marion McKay (mixed media, photography, watercolour), Tom Newell (giclee fine art reproduction), Shirley Quinton (paintings), Patricia Schwartz (watercolour, fabric art, landscape quilts), Molly Stouffer,

(paintings), Tammy Zebruck (paintings & drawings), and Northern Exposures (Photos by Cory McCrindle)

Word on the Water, Oct. 21 - 23

Kenora's second annual literary festival, Word on the Water, benefitted from LOWAC's mandate when LOWAC contributed \$900 — money well spent.

The festival was about twice as large as last year's and offered writers and readers so much more. This year a day of workshops was added, and included a brunch where writers, readers and presenting authors socialized. Both additions were well attended.

2011 was a foundation year for Word on the Water. It acquired a logo and a website, established a social media presence, connected with arts/writing groups throughout Northwestern Ontario and Eastern Manitoba including Winnipeg.

The program including readings, panel discussions and a book fair and featured The Aboriginal Writers Collective of Manitoba on the Friday night with Armin Wiebe and Wayne Tefs on the Saturday night.

Everyone who took part was impressed with the program and the friendly, enthusiastic atmosphere of the event.

The festival received great financial support from throughout Kenora and beyond. Sponsors included LOWAC, LOWBIC, Kenora Hospitality Alliance, David Gibson and Associates, and Elizabeth Campbell Books, Copperfin Credit Union. Sponsorship also came from beyond Kenora. The University of Manitoba's Creative and Cultural Development Fund and the Manitoba Magazine Publishers Association also contributed.

A festival like this is a boon for Kenora. Festival's can be an economic force in our community.



2x2 4 U Exhibit and Sale displayed on the lawn during the Coney Island Music Festival

Community Arts Hub

Hub hopping with programs

The following programs are held at the Community Arts Hub, 528 3rd Ave South. For more information call 467-5262.

Open Studio - Mondays

1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Join us every Monday for Open Studio at the Community Arts Hub, 528 Third Ave. S. All of our art supplies will be available, including canvas and paints, or you can bring your own projects. No experience is necessary.

In the Key of Community - Tuesdays

Noon - 1 p.m.

Instead of running to the gym for a workout on lunch hour come and get some vocal exercise! In the Key of Community Singing Circle is a place to explore new genres, vocal ranges and just have fun!

Coffee House and Jam - Thursdays

7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

An open stage night where we encourage song, poetry, stories and jamming. Feel free to bring your instrument and your friends for a night to celebrate local music!

Art Partners

Sign-up for an Art Partners session. Sign-up with a friend or come to meet new people. We'll explore acrylics, watercolours, clay, collage and group art.

No experience required. Materials provided. Call 467-5262 for details on the next session.

Publicize your art event through LOWAC

If you have an arts event you want to publicize, post it on our Facebook page or send us a message to be posted in our website calendar.

To post on Facebook

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....

To have something added to our Event Calendar, send a message to info@lowac.ca.

Arts Calendar

November 26 - We Talk Fearlessly Battle of the Bands

We Talk Fearlessly, Song Search & Much Video Dance, November 26, 8 p.m. - 10:30 p.m., Beaver Brae High School. Five bands will participate in this battle of the bands. Selection of contest winners will be determined by votes on the WTF_nwo Facebook page. Videos of each performance will be posted for viewing Nov. 26 - Dec. 3. 1st prize: Professional recording of winning song by DC Productions, 2nd prize: \$200 Northern Sounds and Systems gift card, 3rd prize: \$100 Northern Sounds and Systems gift card. All participating bands will get free WTF black hoodies! We Talk Fearlessly is provided by the NWHU Youth Action on Drugs Project in partnership with the OPP, Kenora Substance Abuse and Mental Health Task Force & Beaver Brae High School.

November 29 - December 3 - Anne of Green Gables

TryLight Theatre Co. presents Anne of Green Gables. The production will start with a 3 p.m. matinee on Sunday, Nov. 27. Tickets are available at the Kenora Public Library: Adults \$15 Students and Seniors \$12. At the door slightly higher. Show starts at 8 p.m. each night, however, Celtic Group MAC will be entertaining from 7:15 - 7:45 each night.

December 1 - 3 - Festival of Trees

The Kenora and Lake of the Woods Regional Community Foundation is set to launch its annual Christmas fundraiser at the Lake of the Woods Museum from December 1 to 3. This year's theme is *Christmas at the Lake*. Trees, wreaths and gingerbread houses are decorated and auctioned with all proceeds benefiting the Community Foundation. Seniors Night (\$8) - Thursday, December 1; Gala & Auction (\$50) - Friday, December 2; Family Day (\$3) - Saturday, December 3. Tickets are available at the Lake of the Woods Museum. Family Day tickets available at the door.

Lake of the Woods Concert Series

The Lake of the Woods Concert Group offers a professional series of concerts to the City of Kenora and surrounding area. Tickets are available at The Blue Heron, Johnson's Pharmacy, Ho Joe Coffee and Books, and The Sunset Gallery.

January 14, Saturday, 7:30 p.m., Knox Church, Tickets \$20

Oh My Darling conjures up the right mix of emotion and elation with their unique brand of country. Their prairie roots mixed with bluegrass, Appalachian old time, southern twang, and Franco-folk, make their style a melting pot of musical languages. Their music will get your hips swinging, toes tapping, and put your heart right into their hands.

Tuesday, February 14th, 7:30 p.m., Knox Church, Tickets \$20

The Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra, a perennial favourite, promises an exciting evening of symphonic music.....not to be missed!!!!

Friday, February 24, 7:30 p.m., Lakewood School, Tickets \$25

Manitoba Theatre Center

The Manitoba Theatre Center will present *The Melville Boys* by Norm Foster. Lee and Owen Melville arrive at a lakeside cabin for a relaxing weekend of fishing and brotherly bonding. Before they can open their tackle boxes, their plans are not-so-rudely interrupted by the arrival of two attractive, but very different, sisters. Canadian playwright Norm Foster shows why he's often compared to Neil Simon with this funny and tender play about four people cast adrift who help each other find their way.

Friday, April 20, 7:30 p.m. Knox United Church. Tickets \$25.

Arrogant Worms -

As the best music ages, its complexity increases, reaching towards an elusive, near mystical peak, with bitterness yielding to a soft, mellow perfection. The Arrogant Worms have been aged 20 years and on "Hindsight 20/20", we are treated to the finest of the Ch'teau des Worms. Worth it for the dance remix of "The Last Saskatchewan Pirate" alone. Old wine in new bottles? Yes please.