

# Synergy

Volume 1; Issue 2; January 2009

*Inspiring unity, joy and opportunity through the arts*

*The newsletter of Lake of the Woods Arts Collective*

## Inside

- Kick Start Your Creativity -- Pg.2
- Learn guitar ----- Pg.2
- Starving Artists Program--- Pg.2
- Film Festival Returns ----- Pg.2
- KDFA 2009 news ----- Pg.3
- TryLight Theatre ----- Pg.3
- Meet the Board ----- Pg.4
- LOWAC's first multi-discipline event ----- Pg.5
- Visual Artists' Report ----- Pg.5
- Retrospective 2008----- Pg.6

## LOWAC: A masterpiece in the making

*By LeeAnn Hawkins, co-chair*

LOWAC – Inspiring Unity, Joy and Opportunity through the Arts. Four short months ago, through a long evening of brainstorming, this mission statement evolved.

A cacophony of voices with numerous suggestions and differing opinions, with guidance and patience, eventually found harmony. It was through a substantial amount of communication, creativity and consensus that LOWAC's mission statement was birthed. It was a truly inspired and inspiring moment. Now we seek its manifestation. To do this, more communication and creativity is needed again, and will be the order of the day.

We all know the feeling of a blank page, a white canvas, an empty stage, or a lump of raw clay. What we are experiencing now is the loving hands of artists molding and transforming the medium into a spectacular work of art. It's a collaborative work and it needs continuous discussion to take form. And throughout this all, there are challenges both economic and organizational.

What is LOWAC? What can it do for me? Why should I join? Is it an umbrella group? With whom or what is it competing for the meager art money? What is expected from the members? What do Lake of the Woods artists need?

It's not easy to have definitive answers to all these questions; LOWAC is only now settling into itself.

LOWAC was created to help all arts network and connect with each other. It was formed with the hopes of building support in this community for the arts and for artists. It is a sounding board for ideas, ventures, and a place to come with ideas for events. LOWAC is both a place for artists and an avenue for supporting art.

Its focus is helping arts thrive, whether this be monetarily or through community attendance to events.

Artists and arts supporters should join to demonstrate faith in the evolution LOWAC is hoping to create in this community. We want people to come aboard to show solidarity with art, with each other as artists and with the dream that perhaps one day Kenora and the surrounding area will be a hotbed of artistic activity. It is both an umbrella group and a bureaucratic connector to funding, planning and the like.

Perhaps a better analogy would be a base or a trampoline or a new garden. We are the place where things jump off or where things grow.

LOWAC is a place for those who want to build community to find kindred spirits who want to make a difference in this place we live. We are all about getting as much funding as we possibly can for ALL disciplines and people. No rhyme or reason here—if there's funding to be had, and you have an idea about putting it to use, then we can help.

LOWAC members are from every walk of life—even non-artists. They are all ages, abilities and from all disciplines. We welcome anyone, knowing that without support, faith and an appreciative audience, this organization could not exist.

We are an artwork in progress.

One thing is both obvious and crucial. To grow into what it needs to be, LOWAC needs a foundation to stand on—and this is very simply moral support—our community's faith in the vision of a better place to live.

We ask for financial support in the form of membership for now, just to get off the ground. With our area artists' collaboration and TIME, we will mold the most glorious piece of art.

Let's mold LOWAC into a masterpiece. Let's give it the necessary faith, time and energy it requires to become a work of art.

The New Year will bring fabulous opportunities for ALL arts to come together! Peace!

*LeeAnn*



*Happy New  
Year to one  
and all.*

*May your  
2009 be  
creative and  
prosperous.*

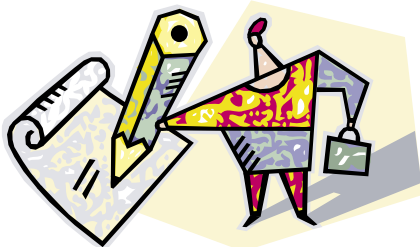
# Synergy

is the newsletter of the Lake of the Woods Arts Collective, and is published every other month. The next issue will be April, 2009. Deadline for submissions is March 8, 2009.

Please send submissions to Elsie Neufeld by email - [eneufeld@voyageur.ca](mailto:eneufeld@voyageur.ca). For more information either email or phone her at 548-8455

**Synergy: Increased effectiveness, achievement etc. produced by combined action, co-operation, etc.**

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## The Artist's Way

# Kick Start Your Creativity in 2009

Starting in January, and running for 12 consecutive weeks, LOWAC will be offering *The Artist's Way: A Course in Discovering and Recovering Your Creative Self*. Based on Julia Cameron's classic, *The Artist's Way*, the course will explore

## Learn guitar

David Caissy is offering guitar lessons on Mondays at 10am to 4pm, Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 10am to 4pm and 6pm to 10pm. Lessons are \$40/hour or \$20/30 min. Call him to book a time - 467-3074.



## Starving Artists Fund initiated

This year, LOWAC has received anonymous donations with the stipulation that the money be used to cover costs of membership for those not able to pay.

Called the Starving Artists Fund, this money is available to anyone wishing to join LOWAC, in any or all of the arts disciplines.

Artists wanting more information about requesting financial help with their membership may email Kim Ratuski at [kratuski@hotmail.com](mailto:kratuski@hotmail.com), or phone 543-3103.

## Become a Member of LOWAC

LOWAC is asking artists and arts supporters to purchase membership to seed the start-up costs of the collective and to help fulfill the goals the collective members set.

Benefits of membership include:

- "Synergy" (electronically delivered) – the arts newsletter being published by LOWAC which includes upcoming events and other relevant information for and from the arts community
- networking opportunities with artists and those involved in the arts community
- information and notices on events/ job opportunities
- inclusion in the Artist's Directory
- visibility as an artist through LOWAC
- a vote at collective meetings

Future benefits, as they become available,

this invaluable guide to living the artist's life.

This course is non-denominational, and is perfect for artists of ANY discipline. Facilitators Kris Goold and Kimberley Ratuski will guide participants on their spiritual path to higher creativity, doing weekly exercises created to unblock artists and open them up to their potential.

Fee: \$50 for LOWAC members (to cover facilities/coffee/tea). This comes to about \$4 per session. (Non-members: \$60.)

Participants are asked to have the book *The Artist's Way*, by Julia Cameron (\$24.00 at Chapters) for the duration of the course.

Start date: January 26, Monday. 7-8:30 pm. Running for 12 consecutive weeks.

Call Kimberley at 543-3103 for more information or to register.

## Film Festival Returns

Mount Evergreen Ski Hill will once again host the Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour on Sat. Jan.10. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. Tickets are available at Mount Evergreen Ski or the Hardware Company.

The films will be shown at T.A. school and the big film this year is Ice Climbing. There are many other shorter movies that are planned as well.

Go to <http://www.skikenora.com> for more information.

will include tangibles such as access to a LOWAC facility, web visibility, school credits/scholarships and more...

Memberships paid in 2008 will be honoured for all of 2009.

Membership fees are:

- Member - \$50
- Student - \$25
- Member-at-Large (those "non-artists" that would like to support the initiative) - \$25
- Organizations - \$100

If you want to take advantage of LOWAC membership, please send your fees to: LOWAC

P. O. Box 10002  
Harbour Postal Outlet  
Kenora ON P9N 4T1

If you would like more information free to email me at Lee Ann Hawkins [hawk@kmts.ca](mailto:hawk@kmts.ca).

# Adult submissions included in 2009



The Kenora District Festival of the Arts (K DFA) works to promote the development of performing talent in music, dance, speech and visual arts for the advancement of the performer and cultural development of the community.

In 2008, the K DFA successfully introduced a new component to the Festival — a Visual Arts category. With a desire to work with the community

to grow this endeavor, we are excited to be working with the Lake of the Woods Museum as a host for the exhibit of submitted works.

For 2009, we are also expanding the classes to include Adult submissions. Two- and three-dimensional works of art will be exhibited during the run of the K DFA, with an Opening Night Reception on April 15th. Examples of 2-D works could include—but are not exclusive to—drawing, painting, photography, printing, mixed media, tapestry or quilting and 3-D works could include pottery, ceramic, sculpture and mosaic.

For more information contact Holly Friesen at 548-2098 or [hollyannfriesen@mac.com](mailto:hollyannfriesen@mac.com), or look at your local library for the K DFA binder.

The deadline for entry is February 1st, 2009. Note that your submitted piece does not have to be completed until the drop-off date of April 8th.

The 2009 K DFA will run from April 15 to 29th with the HiLites concert on May 2nd.

## TryLight Theatre

# *The Music Man from the Director's view*

By Gord Day Janz

The Music Man was a show that one minute could be massively frustrating and the next exhilarating.

Though there are always things I wish I could change or add, I have to say I was thrilled with the product we put on stage. Every actor, whether Harold Hill or girl #2, found a character and for two hours and fifteen minutes every night, Nov. 20—29, became that character.

That's important because when things go wrong, if you know your character, you can always make things right. The show wasn't perfect, some nights far from it, but I was absolutely happy with it!

Every show has its challenges. This one had its share and there were times when we truly wondered if we had bitten off more than we could chew. We usually found solutions to the problems that came up and when we couldn't, we simply learned to live with it. The question that needed to be answered then was not, "How can we solve this problem?", but rather, "What's most important to the scene?" When that question was answered we were able to live with the unsolvable problem.

As for the dinner theatre, I am not certain what our expectations were, but I can say the result was pleasing. Anyone I heard from felt the evening was well worth the price. If we had expectations it was to give people a full night out for as reasonable a price as we could muster. Well over 100 people enjoyed the dinner theatre and had a nice night out. It may be a simple expectation but the results were gratifying.

The worst moment for me was when we had to take two precious late rehearsals to do tech stuff when we planned for only one. As the first evening wore on and it became very clear we were not going to accomplish anywhere near what we had hoped, my heart fell.

It meant rather than doing two full run throughs, we would have to finish up the tech stuff and then hope the final run through would be okay. Happily, the cast came to the rescue and found another evening most everybody could be available for an additional rehearsal.

There were many great moments. Watching the kids, waiting for my favourite scene, or being able to laugh at the wonderfully unexpected all made for

great moments. The best moment was something only I experienced.

Towards the end of the run, one of the actors who had auditioned to simply be a chorus member, because she was fearful of saying lines or singing solos (she ended up doing both), came to me.

"Gord, I'm a bad actor," she said. "Why?" I asked.

"Because in Iowa Stubborn (the first scene with the whole cast) we are all supposed to be grumpy and upset, and I have this big grin on my face because I'm actually on stage in the lights doing this!" It just doesn't get any better than that!

The cast and crew saved their best for the last, which is unusual. It was during the last performance that everyone found their stride, everything clicked, and the audience saw the production at its best. After 9 nights of performances and fighting exhaustion, everyone dug into reserves of energy and found they had an exceptional performance to deliver.

There were a few tears at the end, which is not unusual. In fact, it's those tears that usually make me come back and do it all over again.

# Meet the Board

*Elsie Neufeld*  
*Vice-chair*

I'm a freelance non-fiction writer with several years of experience as newspaper reporter/photographer. For many years, I saw myself as an information junkie and chronic daydreamer who wrote to justify her compulsions rather than a writer.

At some point, I discovered the genre known as creative non-fiction, a form where writers can be literary and journalistic simultaneously. Since then I have seen myself as a writer.



I came to believe in the power of arts communities came while a newspaper reporter in Grande Prairie, Alberta, during the economic bust in the 1980s. During this difficult time the arts community transformed an old tire shop into a theatre and an old school into an art gallery.

In 1985, the Alberta Foundation for the Performing Arts presented me with a weekly newspaper award for Best Article on the Performing Arts by a Writer. That personal achievement was possible because Grande Prairie had a dynamic, cohesive arts

community. Everybody benefits from a vibrant arts community.

I traded journalism for stationary engineering and now work at Weyerhaeuser. I left Grande Prairie and landed in Kenora in 1991. With the creation of LOWAC I see the potential to have a dynamic arts community here. This time I'm a participant rather than an observer. It will be interesting.

*Holly Friesen*  
*Secretary*

I am a self-taught artist and have been painting for many years, working mostly with acrylics.

Prior to moving to Kenora in 2002, I spent several years as a researcher in plant genetics, for which I have a graduate degree. Currently, in addition to creating art, I conduct research for a range of clients in the sciences and the arts, including not-for-profit organizations.

I have been involved in local arts by both organizing and participating in exhibits. I also successfully introduced visual arts to the Kenora District Festival of the Arts last year, thanks to the support of other artists, teachers and those with an interest in the arts in the community.

Some of my hopes for this community are that art, in all its forms, becomes more visible to the public. We are fortunate to have so many talented artists here to share and provide inspiration in the

area. I would like to see our community embrace and showcase its talented individuals. As a mother of three small daughters, that is the environment in which I would like them to grow.



**In each issue of Synergy we will introduce you to the Lake of the Woods Arts Collective board and other artists who are LOWAC.**

## *LOWAC directors and representatives*

As well as the executive members, LOWAC has several committees and branches working behind the scenes.

Youth Representative: Cypress Friend

Summer Resident Liason: Pippi Johnson

Fundraising: Marion McKay/Kim Ratuski

City Liason: Rory McMillan

Visual Artists: Irene McQuaig, Kris Goold

Theatre: Gord Day-Janz

Graphic Design: Mike Newton

CAHEP (Community Arts and Heritage Education Project):

Andy Simons

Lindy Henderson

Kim Ratuski

Kenora Commission on Public Art  
(Creating an artistic plan for the final phase of the BIG Spruce):

Kim Ratuski

Pippi Johnson

Cory McCrindle

# LOWAC's first multi-discipline event

By Kris Goold

To the Members of LOWAC:

I see that we are like racehorses, at the starting gate ready to take off, chomping at the bit! We (especially the visual artists) have had many requests to volunteer our talents for the community. We have some great plans for events and projects for this summer..all great and exciting, BUT...

Are we ready to do an art exhibit for Valentine's day? Starting February 13th, and running until February 20th. I propose we have an exhibit at Fragile Glass Studio, which very soon will be located at the Belfry.

This would be based on the theme of THE KISS and called:

A Tribute to *The Kiss*: Work Inspired by Gustav Klimt --presented by LOWAC.

I see:

-Writers writing poetry, essays or short stories based on the artist's work (if one could get really inspired to write a novel, the artwork for the book can easily be accessed by another artist).

-Poets could hand over poetry to song writers and composers to create full musical works.

-Photographers can shoot live models, staged from one of the paintings of Klimt.

-Songwriters have done *Starry Night* inspired by Van Gogh; why not Klimt?

-Textiles in swirls of golden thread

-Batiks in tall lanterns which would illuminate

-Furniture painted with wonderful patterns and design work this artist used in his work

-Jewelery makers—using his palette/ geometry and golds..

-Home decor artists making pillows, handbags etc.

Klimt became famous for works such as *The Kiss*, *Mother and Child*, etc., however he did a whole range of other work— landscape painting, skeleton figures, fabric and pattern designs.

See <http://www.peintre-analyse.com/baiserus.htm>

There is a bit of everything to provide you with inspiration. Is it doing anything for you? Can you catch the vision?

*The Kiss* is found in bedrooms all over the world. As passionate artists, we are ready to expose ourselves through our work. The theme can be sensual and romantic, and so fitting for Valentine's Day.

On opening night --February 13th, performances and readings will be publicly shared. During the week the public can read and listen to recorded music by the artists. Visual artists attending the opening will be able to discuss their work with the public and each other.

If an original print of Klimt's work accompanies the artwork the public will know where you got your inspirations.

—A 'blurb' about your work will also be needed!

All artists of LOWAC will help in advertising, making the public aware in your sphere of influence. This should be promoted as an evening to take your lover out to an art exhibit, and have a glass of wine before dinner at a favorite restaurant.

All artists will contribute to the wine bar and bring "goodies" for opening night.

All sales will go directly to the artist whose piece is being purchased.

If this is successful we could do a book like 'Forms of Hope: the art of the female torso', to capture the corporate collection. The exhibit will run Friday 13th. Opening night from 7-9.

Open evenings 13, 14, 15th from 7-9. Open during the day 10-5:30 till February 19th.

If the public does not respond in February we are ready to have the exhibit in the summer.

Artists will be available during the day to greet the public, and I will be there to host this event during the day and sell your work on your behalf.

I will supply coffee and baking for our guests during the daytime as well.



Visual artists assemble the LOWAC Christmas tree which consisted of 20 12"x12" paintings by LOWAC members. The Christmas tree was bought by Geordie McEwen for \$550.00 at the Festival of Trees, a fundraiser for Lake of the Woods Community Foundation, held at the Lake of the Woods Museum, Dec. 5.

## Visual Artists' Report

### Museum looks for partnership in exhibit

By Irene McCuaig

1. Museum and Kenora's War Brides: Our Oct. 29th meeting was attended by Lori Nelson from the Lake of the Woods Museum. Lori was testing the waters to see how artists felt about partnering with the area's war brides to visually represent the story of each war bride. The Museum is planning this exhibit for fall of 2009. Because the artists in attendance were enthusiastic about the idea, Lori will be providing us with a list of the war brides in our area so we can begin work. If anyone wants to be included in this exciting method of preserving some of Kenora's

history, let us know.

2. We completed four gift boxes to go under the City's Christmas tree.

3. Keewatin Artisan Show: Last summer, Gwen Compton and many Keewatin volunteers, organized the first Keewatin Artisan show held at Beatty Park. Gwen is interested in holding the event again this summer and is looking for volunteers to help out.

4. The 2x2xU art exhibit (a collection of artwork measuring 2x2) is underway for the summer. Details pending.

[mccuaig@voyageur.ca](mailto:mccuaig@voyageur.ca)

# The six months that changed the Lake of the Woods arts community

By Kim (Kahoot) Ratuski, co-chair

I love writing these things. They are a tangible, in-your-face way of rubber-necking the blur that was 2008.

And they help put some perspective where perspective is due. So, without further ado...

*LOWAC: The First Six Months*

Holy Moly, 2008 was a great year! And it was only HALF a year.

It was the year of imagining, dreaming and doing. It was the year of visioning—a time of coming together and sharing ideas.

For me, the coming together is the most important, exciting aspect of all this. How long I have wanted Kenora to have a vibrant, visible arts community—emphasis on COMMUNITY!!

How wonderful it is to see total strangers around the variety of tables we have, each learning, sharing and connecting with each other. And despite the growing pains, the decisions, the musts and shoulds, the rules, the discussions...despite all THAT, I must say I have had a great deal of fun these last few months. Between the meetings, the crossing the t's and dotting the i's, we have made some big plans, put together some events, and are revving on high for the New Year.

And what fun it will be!

A multi-discipline tribute to Gustav Klimt's *The Kiss*, A July Outdoor Art Exhibit celebrating the lake, studio tours, workshops, funding opportunities, and so much more.

We have the beginnings of a Music and Mentorship programme for Kenora's youth. We have another writer's group in our city--Writer's of the Woods--creating some amazing literary work.

Our youth are excited about hanging out with established, experienced artists. Our older citizens are becoming involved. We have retirees and lake people offering their skills and talents--wanting to be part of Kenora's burgeoning arts scene.

An offshoot of LOWAC, a committee called Community Arts and Heritage Education Programming (Kenora), is putting together ideas to offer at-risk youth a place to create and connect this summer--a summer art camp. The past while has seen some growing pains, and a few valid questions...why do we need to have membership? How do we all fit into the organization when it mostly consists of Visual Artists?

All I can say, is that for the organization to be a viable entity worthy of obtaining funding, then we must take measures to do things right.

If this means spending some bucks on insurance, or asking someone to throw her/his \$50 (\$25 for students) in the hat for the costs of start-up, then maybe this just has to happen. And when we get up on our financial feet, and are more able to access grants/government and corporate funding this will certainly not be needed.

I guess I see start-up membership dues as a declaration of faith in the growth and the vision of arts in our city.

The board and many other members are volunteering long hours to create exhibits, workshops, and events for the coming year... to bring people here to share ideas/skills, to offer a way of connecting through our newsletter (thanks, by the way, to Elsie Neufeld, for creating this newsletter), and a whole host of other things: networking/funding/creating/lobbying the city.

It is all happening, thanks to this organization and the people who are giving their spare time to put it together.

But these wonderful things have costs...and that is exactly where you money is going: to fund a whole host of MULTI-DISCIPLINARY events, to encourage arts in this area, to make

art a part of our daily life.

I encourage musicians, theatrical people, dancers and writers to join. Become involved and help your discipline.

LOWAC is striving to meet the needs of all arts in the area. We need committed people wanting to join and make a difference in these fields.

In the meantime, 2009's FIRST event is a fun one. We have been invited to participate in *Fragile Glass* at the Belfry's Valentine's tribute to Gustav Klimt's *The Kiss*. (see Pg. 5 for details)

Celebrate your art, celebrate love, meet others, share ideas, network, and CREATE.

I think it will be a fabulous opportunity for ALL arts to come together. And I predict this is just the beginning of multi-disciplinary events. Exciting!!

To all who got involved in 2008, building arts in the city through Lake of the Woods Arts Collective:

I deeply appreciate your faith, your talent, your hard work and creativity. I look forward to visioning, dreaming and DOING in 2009.

May everyone have a peaceful, joyous and CREATIVE 2009. Cheers!

Kimberley (Kahoot) Ratuski



Lake of the Woods Concert Series  
presents

# BeBop Cowboys

Jan 14

Knox United Church