

Culture Days a 'resounding success'

Kelly Carrington
Staff Writer

Nearly 80 events throughout Flin Flon-Creighton helped to make this year's Culture Days a "resounding success."

Organizer Crystal Kolt, coordinator of the Flin Flon Arts Council, had nothing but positive things to say about last weekend.

"It was just such a resounding success," she said.

Events were held throughout the community and as far away as Bakers Narrows.

Numerous events were held out at Bakers with the weather cooperating more than anyone could have hoped for, as Kolt said some of the success of the event came from the fine weather.

"It was such a beautiful day on Saturday," Kolt said, noting that plenty of places around the province had periods of rain over the weekend.

"That was so important for all the events out at Bakers."

Sunshine, a great community and plenty of spirit were just some of the key ingredients for Culture Days.

"I have no other words in terms of how well it went," Kolt said, calling it a "resounding success again."

Culture Days had big expectations to live up to this year as some events made national headlines in previous years.

But Kolt said the new-

est additions are nothing to glance over.

"All the new events that were added really seemed to (integrate well) in terms of inclusion in Culture Days," Kolt said.

This year's Culture Days featured big events like Culture Shock, Dancing Down Main Street, guest speakers, Culture's Cool for Kids as well as smaller events like knife-carving and beadwork at Bakers Narrows.

Information from the local events – including participation numbers – will be sent to the national office of Culture Days to see how Flin Flon stacked up against other communities and cities in Canada.

"I'm really proud of what we've done and how well received it is in the community," Kolt said.

Kolt says the participation of residents, visitors and volunteers made "for a great weekend."

Last year, Flin Flon ranked seventh in the country in terms of its number of Culture Days events.

Kolt says every year the Culture Days events are held, the more popular the become.

Because of that, she says it's hard to tell where Flin Flon will rank this year.

"Some parts of the country are just starting to get into it, and some places this is their second or third year and they might be going full steam a head," she said.

Kolt says a misconception of Culture Days relates to how big an event needs to be.

She explained that in Montreal, everyone was asked to place their favourite piece of art in their front window for everyone to see.

"It doesn't have to be a huge deal. It doesn't have to be like the Culture Shock (concert) and the Human Library (meet and greet)," she said.

"It can be one person showing up at Pioneer Square. It's about getting people to understand, and it's a celebration of what you like in art."

Message

Kolt says Culture Days spreads a powerful message that means something different to each person.

"Whether you're an artist or not, we're all involved in that world," she said. "It's the colour we decide to put on in the morning and its the artists and their careers."

"It's all a part of our lives one way or another."

Flin Flonners were able to find out what art meant to them as they took in guest speakers, hanging art, visual arts and much more this past weekend.

Locally, there were roughly 80 events this year, up from previous years.

But Flin Flon isn't the only place where those numbers are growing.

Last year, over 5,000 events were held nationally. This year, though the numbers have not yet been confirmed, an estimated 8,000 events took place across Canada.

Brilliance

The local events were

put together with local flare and spirit.

Organizers and volunteers worked countless hours to ensure the schedules were done, the events were put together, and there were no major issues.

"A big thank-you to everyone," said Kolt as she mentioned Brent and Susan Lethbridge, Gerry Clark and many others as important to the success of Culture Days.

One event Kolt was able to attend as a guest was Wild Rice, a cabaret celebrating women in art. The Saturday night event saw performances all evening.

"I didn't know what to expect," said Kolt, as she mentioned she was not involved in the organizing of the event. "I was really happy to just show up."

Wild Rice was planned in less than a month and saw a "domino effect" of success as performers lined up to take the stage.

The free event "turned out just beautifully," said Kolt.

Since moving to Flin Flon roughly 20 years ago, Kolt says it was "clear from that performance



how we have developed in a musical community in the past two decades.”

Though the evening celebrated women in the arts, the stage was open to all.

“We just wanted to celebrate women in the arts and (it wasn’t) exclusive to females. It was really a community collaboration,” Kolt said.

Culture Days began Friday in the Flin Flon and Creighton schools as well as at St. Ann’s Roman Catholic Church with Culture’s Cool for Kids.

Events continued Friday and Saturday and wrapped up Sunday.

Again this year, the Dancing Down Main Street was a big success as an estimated 250 people

danced to Michael Buble’s *It’s A Beautiful Day*.



Guest speaker and former Flin Flon Norm Crerar stopped for a picture with Culture Days organizer Crystal Kolt.



Children were given the chance to find plenty of ‘gold’ rocks during this Culture Days activity.



PHOTOS BY KELLY CARRINGTON AND KAREN MACDONALD
The robot station was popular for guests of all ages. A table set up at Bakers Narrows showed the ins-and-outs of robots and gave people a chance to play with them.