



Leading a dynamic community celebrating the *Arts*

Cat Piano in concert for First Friday Red Deer, April 10 in the Snell Auditorium at the Kiwanis Gallery.

Red Deer Arts Council and Red Deer Public Library are pleased to present a *First Friday Red Deer Concert* with **Cat Piano**.

Kyle Gonzales, Sam Vesely, and Chad Lorrain, students from Lindsay Thurber Comprehensive High School, will be performing on April 10, 2015 in the Snell Auditorium (Kiwanis Gallery) of the downtown branch of the Red Deer Public Library.

In terms of style, they will be playing their favorite jazz standards, some funk songs they wrote and jamming. Chad is a drummer and saxophonist. Sam plays trumpet and will be pursuing jazz piano at MacEwan next year. Kyle plays bass. Performances times: 6:15 to 6:45 pm, then 7:00 to 7:30 pm. Refreshments served and all are welcome to attend.

Continuing: February 24 to April 26, 2015
Take a Second Look at Your Plate: Photographs by Anne Marie Resta

We elected 2 new board members at our AGM on March 27th. Welcome Sherry Scheunert and Craig Scott to the board! A full slate of board members will help us achieve our goals for 2015 and beyond.

First Friday Red Deer is sponsored by the Red Deer Downtown Business Association



Board members at the March 27th AGM. Joining us is Sherry Scheunert (seated at the piano) and Craig Scott (not in the photo).
Photograph by Rob Ironside



A full house for our AGM with President Scott Barnabé presiding.
Photograph by Rob Ironside



Lorna Watkinson-Zimmer Interview by Paul Cowley

Comforts the Sole's mascot giraffe is a reminder for owner Lorna Watkinson-Zimmer of the importance of supporting the arts in the community. The long-necked papier-mâché sculpture has been a whimsical sentinel in her downtown shop for ages. It was produced by a local artist who tried to make a go of it in Red Deer for years before deciding to move to Vancouver and its larger art scene.

"When I opened the shop I just thought there are artists out there who don't get a chance to show off their art," she said. To that end, she has turned a corner of her shop into a makeshift art gallery numerous times over the years. Watkinson-Zimmer, says she has always loved art and has been a dues-paying member of the council for the past seven years.

"Before that, I was sort of a member of interest."

But she readily admits she is not an artist herself. "I wish," she says a little wistfully.

Instead, she sees her role as a local arts booster or champion. It's a role she has played as a teacher, businesswoman and five-term city councillor since she moved to this community 42 years ago with husband Dennis Zimmer, who owns Kovac's Manufacturing and Repair less than a block away.

Every community has learned it can count on its small business community to help fund local charities and their projects. But with so many worthy requests, Watkinson-Zimmer knew she needed to focus her support.

"I sort of nailed down that I support the arts," she says. "When we're talking the arts, we're not only talking artists who paint, we're talking musicians, we're talking the whole gamut of art."

A couple of years ago, she invited a local jeweller to show off her works. Watkinson-Zimmer tied it into the First Fridays by keeping her doors open later that night to accommodate the gallery hoppers.

Another local artist found a makeshift gallery for her paintings in Comforts the Sole. While only a small show, word spread among local arts lovers, said Watkinson-Zimmer.

"We do get people coming and saying, "I heard so and so was showing here.""

The artists themselves were grateful for the free exposure.

"Once they knew there was a venue they were very happy," she says. "I'm definitely not looking for it to be something profitable, it's just a venue for artists."

First Fridays is a great idea, she says, and she would like to see more opportunities like that.

Supporting the local arts community is not only about giving. Watkinson-Zimmer feels the artists give back something valuable to their communities.

"I just would love people to think more on the arts. It's something we live with every day. If we took it away what would it look like?"

This yearly report gives the statistics and data of our involvement in the community through our participation in various events, workshops, gallery news and the like. We hope you find it informative.

RDAC is pleased to let you know that we had 88 volunteers for various events, juries, committees, board involvement and audit committee who gave over 2,481 man hours to our council. Their help with our emergency casino was invaluable. We thank all of our committee members, board members and all types of volunteers for their assistance in keeping us focused. At the end of 2014, we had 111 members which included 29 organizational members from performing, visual, literary, businesses, and cultural groups who helped populate our weekly listings to members with their events and news.

We were pleased to present Tree House Youth Theatre as part of "Where's My Tribe?" event following the AGM on March 20th. In honour of International Children's Theatre Day, Tree House Youth Theatre presented work by both their younger and older troupes. This short program included a 17th century nursery rhyme, some poetry and a song, as well as taste of their production of the famously rich and dark masterpiece of musical theatre, "Sweeney Todd - the Demon Barber of Fleet, with 26 people in attendance.

We hosted a Rock the Books II workshop with Janis Richards on small business accounting, 9 people attended this event on February 27, 2014. We jointly presented a series of 6 webinars for visual artists with Culture Services, City of Red Deer with an attendance of 56 people. Workshops for artists and arts organizations on the topic of grants with Alberta Foundation for the Arts were presented on November 24th at City Centre Stage with Red Deer College as a partner. Ross Bradley from the AFA presented two workshops on grants for Emerging and Professional Visual Artists and another on Individual Project Grants. A total of 94 people attended.

We offered our members a table at the Red Deer Public Market. 14 members both individual artists and groups participated in this member benefit program.

Our board members were at East 40th Pub and Grill to host Meat Draw raffles as a fundraiser for us. It was oodles of fun with lots of folks enjoying the pub's fabulous steak sandwiches throughout the two summer months.

Our newsletter articles showcased the following events, artists followed by the interviewer:

January	Membership and Friend Drive	
February	Matt Gould	by Mike Lupul
March	Wendy Meeres	by Mike Lupul
May	Alberta Art and Drafting	by Sherrie Wood
June	Janice Williams	by Carl Hahn
July	Charlie Jacobson	by Annette Gray
August	Country Pride Dancers	by Annette Gray
September	Carl Stretton	by Annette Gray
October	Town and Country Dance Club	by Judy Jackson
November	Artists and Arts Organizations Workshops on Grants	
December	Membership drive & Arts & Craft (Beer) Fundraiser with St. James' Gate	



The articles were written by members of *Writers' Ink* whom we wish to thank for all their hard work. We really appreciated their time and expertise as volunteers.

Part II of this report will be in May's Newsletter. See what else we did in 2014!

I am the Arts

I am a mother, sister, spouse and lover of life.

I enjoy Hawaii, exotic places and home.

I am a business person who appreciates art in all its facets.

I am Lorna Watkinson-Zimmer.

I am proud to call Red Deer home.

Join me in discovering the best our City has to offer.



Lorna Watkinson-Zimmer with her giraffe in Comforts the Sole, 2015
Photograph by Paul Cowley

Upcoming Exhibit in the Kiwanis Gallery:

April 28 to May 24

The 30th Middle Schools Awesome Art Show

Let's see what the 30th anniversary produces for this irreplaceable exhibit!

Become a member of our board or committees and get involved. Give back to the community that you are a part of. Find a rewarding volunteer position with the Arts Council.

We need people to help with our Scholarship & Awards Committee. So if you want to help young aspiring artists, this committee is for you. Call Diana at the office. This committee also oversees the Emerging Artist Award.

Red Deer Arts Council

www.reddeerartscouncil.ca

403-348-2787

info@reddeerartscouncil.ca

Suite 110, 4818-50th Street

Red Deer, Alberta

T4N 4A3

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Thanks to the City of Red Deer for all their support through Culture Services!