

Cultural Task Force Summary-**Festivals and Events Community Conversation**,
United Church Hall: Tue Nov 23, 2015

Eighteen people attended, representing the following events and Festivals: Light-up, Blue Grass Festival, The Philosophers Café Series, Earth Week, Good Will Shakespeare Festival, Harvest Days, Friends of the Library, Equine Development, Friends of the Garden, Remembrance Day, and the fledgling George Ryga Festival.

The group emphasized that this was an agricultural town and we should celebrate that strength with festivals and events. Festivals and events bring people into town, show visitors and residents the variety of places and opportunities in Summerland, and promote diversity. The recommendations from this group were as follows:

Co-ordination of events:

- A paid Non-profit Societies/Community coordinator to help volunteer groups to co-ordinate activities, apply for grants, and oversee meetings with all those who put on events.
- A coordinator of volunteers for events. Possibly a community wide “Volunteers Meet and Greet”? Friends and families getting worn out.

Communication: All groups had difficulty communicating and promoting their events.

*A quarterly mail out brochure of Festival and Events sent out by the City.

*Some events boards around town designated only for events, no sales.

*Access to Sandwich Boards

*Better Signage, a huge electronic sign similar to the Events Center in Penticton.

*A Web Site Calendar where groups could post all events easily.

Facilities and equipment:

- Rodeo Grounds: Expand repair and maintain. This is an ideal place to hold many more events and to entice new ones if the facilities were upgraded. Horse shows, Fall fair with animals, rodeo events, and out door concerts were mentioned. Some covered buildings for displays and exhibits and shelter from bad weather are needed. Handicapped access is poor. The group considered Rodeo grounds an undeveloped treasure.
- Some coordination at city level for travelling sound and light equipment which would be purchased jointly by non-profit groups for events which attract people to town.
- Volunteer non-profit societies need some relief on rentals from city owned facilities.
- Groups need a space or hub to work out of – cultural/community centre.

There was pervading feeling expressed that recreation was well funded and those that were sports inclined were well served with facilities, events, and paid employees. However they felt that those whose activities were outside the realm of sports were not being served equitably by the City and were expected to run their events strictly by volunteers. They also felt that the value of their events in terms of economics (money brought into town), enrichment, and improvement of quality of life were not recognized. They were hopeful that the cultural task force would be able to get them the help they needed to continue the work on their events and festivals.