

2000 October 19

TO: CITY MANAGER
FROM: DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES
SUBJECT: **DISCOVERY DAYS 2000: AN ARTS CELEBRATION - JULY 21-23, 2000**
PURPOSE: To provide Council with information regarding Discovery Days 2000: An Arts Celebration.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT this report be received for information.

REPORT

At its meeting of 2000 October 18, the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission received the attached report and adopted the recommendation contained therein.



Kate Friars
DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION
AND CULTURAL SERVICES

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Attachment

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT this report be forwarded to Council for information.

REPORT

BACKGROUND

The City of Burnaby's key community millennium celebration centred around the expansion and enhancement of Burnaby's largest annual festival, Discovery Days. The three day millennium event, called Discovery Days 2000: An Arts Celebration, took place July 21 - 23, 2000 in and around Deer Lake Park and included the Vancouver Symphony concert, The Discovery Day Festival, the Night of 2000 Lights and the Deer Lake Blues Festival.

The celebratory weekend also joined the Burnaby community with its sister cities of Kushiro, Japan, Mesa AZ and Gatineau, PQ in a wonderful celebration of people and cultural exchange.

Key components of the weekend are summarized below.

Vancouver Symphony Orchestra Concert in the Park - Friday, July 21

The kick off to the weekend was the ever popular free Symphony concert in the park, co-presented by the City's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services and Trans Mountain Pipe Line Ltd. The audience was the largest ever and 48% of those polled indicated that they were attending this outdoor concert for the first time! An estimated 9,000 people enjoyed the Symphony and were thrilled by the grand millennium fireworks finale to the 1812 overture.

Discovery Day Festival - Saturday, July 22

A memorable opening ceremony with the Taiko Drummers leading the procession of Sister City Mayors and delegations, the Premier of B.C., the Mayor, Councillors, Commissioners, sponsors and artists, to the Mainstage where the Premier and Sister City Mayors brought their greetings to the assembled.

In spite of the rainy weather, an estimated 4,000 attended this ever popular Festival. 68 non-for-profit community groups and organizations participated (up from 55 in 1999). As always, there was a wide a variety of arts activities offered for family participation including new activities like percussive instrument making, making milk carton lanterns, and the new ecomaze, Floramazia, where over 800 children went on an educational exploration and learned about the science of flowers as they crawled through a huge inflatable flower.

Entertainment on the Mainstage encompassed a World Music theme in honor of the cultural exchanges with our Sister Cities. Both Mesa, AZ and Gatineau, PQ had artists performing.

New features of the Discovery Day Festival incorporated our sister city artists into the events, Art in the Park, a demonstration, show and sale by fourteen local artists in their own tent on the Gallery at Ceperley House lawns and the Gallery's Still Creek Heritage art project.

A popular addition to the Festival was "Ceramics Row", an interactive row of activity on the Shadbolt Centre's East Plaza. The anchor was the display of the Year 2000 Community Clay Project, a project that had over 500 Burnaby citizens participating under the direction of Artist Keith Rice-Jones in creating sections of "sculptural poles" celebrating Burnaby's past, present and future which will be put together and installed as a permanent piece of public art in Burnaby to celebrate the millennium. Sections of the sculptural poles were on display as well as photo displays and artist statements from those who had participated. The public enthusiastically got involved by painting and finishing bisqued medallions commemorating this millennium project. Ceramics Row also had demonstrations by artists both local and from our sister cities and two pottery wheels were set up to allow the public to "try their hand at the wheel". Approximately 2,000 people visited the display area, over 550 painted commemorative medallions and over 100 "tried their hand" at the wheel.

The Night of 2,000 Lights - Saturday, July 22

"The most magical night of the summer for me and my family...hope this becomes an annual event"
- Burnaby citizen (from public survey)

The Night of 2,000 Lights was a first-time event for the City of Burnaby. The City collaborated with the non-profit Public Dreams Society who has for years run a similar successful event at Trout Lake in Vancouver. The Night of 2,000 Lights was designed to address the priority goals of building community, helping the community come together in both entertaining and meaningful ways, encouraging the participation of all ages, and providing access to the arts for the people of Burnaby. On all counts, this event succeeded in achieving its goals beyond the event organizers' expectations.

The event actually began several weeks before the evening of July 22 with tissue paper lanterns being constructed all over Burnaby. The concept of building lanterns in the community that would then be brought back to a magical event in Deer Lake Park captured the interest of Burnaby citizens and the media. The demand for lantern making workshops in advance of the three weeks of workshops initially planned by City event staff became readily apparent and community schools such as Stride and Gilmore and recreation centres like Cameron and Wesburn held lantern workshops to fill that need. Recreation Leaders in charge of summer Parks programs were given a workshop on how to create lanterns and they in turn held lantern making activities in the parks in July throughout Burnaby.

Three weeks of workshops in July were held in Metrotown Centre, Lougheed Mall and Capital Hill Hall. Besides these workshops being heavily attended, the unique partnerships with the commercial retail establishments created a high visibility for spectators and exposure for the event. Over 1,100 lanterns were made at the advance workshops with the total number of participants being far greater as whole families often worked together on the construction of their lantern.

On the evening of July 22, despite the rains, over 1,500 (with surveys showing that 90% of those attending were from Burnaby), braved the wet and brought their lanterns to Deer Lake Park to take part in the fantastical processional and evening event. Public Dreams' creative team had created installations of light and fire all over the site, with incredible performances of fire dancers, stilts and musicians augmenting the lantern processional.

The Night of 2000 Lights proved to be a definite highlight of the City's millennium celebration and offered a unique vehicle for bringing together community from all walks of life.

Deer Lake Blues Festival - Sunday, July 23

Produced in association with Coastal Jazz and Blues Society, the Deer Lake Blues Festival attracted over 1,700 people to this first time ticketed event. The amazing line up of Blues artists included Canadian Artists Jim Byrnes and Michael Pickett; female guitarist Deborah Coleman (who proved to be a crowd favorite); Texas-based Frankie Lee, who strolled out into the crowd to sing and party "with the people" and then received a standing ovation; Billy Branch's unique style of scorching harmonica playing and headliner Robert Cray who played to a standing audience throughout.

The eight hour program was kept moving by Master of Ceremonies, Stormin' Norman from Rock 101. Every generation and a complete socio-economic mix of citizens were scattered on the lawns enjoying the music under blue skies. There was continual comment from the public, and all of the Blues artists about the impeccable sound quality produced at the site and its beautiful location.

The Deer Lake Blues Festival was an important and high profile event for the City and the unique outdoor concert setting at Deer Lake Park.

Sister Cities Cultural Exchange

All three of Burnaby's Sister Cities were invited to participate in the cultural exchange component of the millennium celebration in an exchange of art and artists. The Encores Gallery area in the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts became the "Sister City" gallery with 40 pieces of children's artwork from Kushiro and Mesa framed and exhibited. In exchange, artwork produced by Burnaby students was shipped to Mesa City Hall and exhibited there throughout the summer.

Performing artists from Mesa, Dr. Peter Rolland and Gail Rolland, performed on the Mainstage as did Gatineau Pianist Jean Francois Proulx. Visual artist, Denis Charette from Gatineau, demonstrated his intricate wood sculpting technique all day long on Saturday and Mesan ceramicist, Jeff Reich, fascinated the public with his wheel-throwing demonstrations.

Marketing, Publicity and Fundraising

City event staff worked hard to obtain corporate sponsorship for the millennium celebration and managed to secure corporate support for the weekend totalling \$29,350 in cash and goods-in-kind with a value of over \$60,000. The biggest amount of cash support (\$17,850) came for the perennial favorite, the Discovery Day Festival with a radio sponsorship valued at \$15,000 being given by long-time supporter, CFUN. The Night of 2000 Lights received \$1,500 in donations and a media sponsor package from the Burnaby Now valued at \$12,500.

The Deer Lake Blues Festival received \$10,000 in cash sponsorship and media sponsorships from the Georgia Straight and Rock 101 valued at \$18,000.

A staff person, seconded to act as Publicity and Marketing Coordinator for the millennium celebration worked closely with the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Communications division who designed all of the Year 2000 promotional materials. A media launch was held at the Hilton Hotel and media coverage for the millennium celebration was excellent with our local papers (Burnaby Now and News Leader) providing a large amount of pre-event and ongoing publicity and the Vancouver Sun and Georgia Straight running articles regularly, particularly about the Blues Festival. Television coverage included BCTV (Night of 2000 Lights and the Deer Lake Blues Festival), Rogers and VTV Breakfast show and evening news.

The major promotional piece was the eight page “commemorative insert” which was distributed through the Burnaby Now to 48,000 homes and businesses in Burnaby and provided a comprehensive guide to the weekend events. Print advertising, extensive cross-promotion with other city events, posters, transit shelters, postcards, brochures and promotional items such as balloons and pop-up visors were just some of the methods employed to add to the extensive publicity and marketing campaign.

The awareness that the millennium marketing campaign created of the City of Burnaby, Deer Lake Park, its concerts and the Discovery Day Festival will have an impact with spinoffs with positive benefits for years to come.

Volunteers

A Volunteer Coordinator was engaged in mid-May to set about the task of recruiting, training and motivating the 240 volunteers required for the weekend events. With an average 6 hours worked by each volunteer, over 1,440 hours were contributed by these volunteers.

The dedication of a staff person with this sole responsibility was crucial to the functioning of the weekend events. Volunteers were all given a millennium T-shirt to wear while on duty and in-kind donations were received from local businesses for refreshments for the volunteer lounge. A volunteer appreciation celebration dinner held 10 days after the event was well attended and greatly appreciated by all.

CONCLUSION:

Discovery Days 2000: An Arts Celebration was an incredibly ambitious and successful event that celebrated the millennium in a way to make Burnaby proud. It was a celebration of community, of culture and partnerships with events and memories that will endure. The events underscore the value of cultural activities in celebrating special commemorative years in Burnaby.

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