

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13 Fiscal

Bill Usher - Submitted October, 2013

1. History, mission, promises, core values.

The Golden District Arts Council - branded as Kicking Horse Culture in 2004 - was incorporated as a community arts council in 1970. Our Mission is *"to engage, energize, and enrich the cultural life of Kicking Horse Country."* We serve the town of Golden and Rural Golden - combined population 7,000 - collectively known as Kicking Horse Country.

Kicking Horse Culture (KHC) continues to deliver on a long-range vision to play a central, leadership role in the community by engaging collaborative partnerships to deliver a broad variety of professional cultural programming, arts education, and community arts activities. We strive to make our programming as inclusive as possible of persons of all interests, ages, ethnic origins, and socio-economic status. We seek to use arts and culture as a catalyst to build upon and enhance our local traditions and further develop a strong sense of place, to help make Golden a great place to live and visit.

2. Governance, management staff structure.

We are governed by a volunteer board of community members made up of artists, business people, educators, and professionals. We are managed by professional staff. KHC and the Art Gallery of Golden (all under one roof) employ 7 people - up from 6 in 12/13.

At the time of this writing in September 2013, KHC is managed by executive director Bill Usher (1 FTE) and general manager Cheryl Hurd (1 FTE) with program coordinator Golnaz Zad (1 FTE). Four part-time employees staff the gallery and Studio Gift Shop 6 to 7 days a week depending upon the seasons for an additional 1.2 FTE.

3. Administrative, production and performance facilities.

KHC rents the 2200 sq. ft. building which houses the Art Gallery of Golden (in front) and the 3-room office (in back). Summer 2013, we did extensive renovations to move and enclose the dividing wall between the gallery and the offices to ensure more space and separation for the office staff. We receive permissive tax exemption from property tax by the municipality. On behalf of the Town of Golden, KHC manages the operations of the renovated Golden Civic Centre, a two level community hall where we stage our concert performances, and where a variety of community activities (meetings, camps, weddings, and clubs) are held. KHC produces our Summer Kicks series of up to 10 weekly free performances and our MasqueParade in Golden's Spirit Square downtown by the covered bridge.

4. Funding and Service Delivery overview.

We have service delivery funding agreements with:

- Kicking Horse Country: a 3 year multi-term combined service delivery agreement with the Town of Golden and the Columbia Shuswap Regional District Area A
- Town of Golden: various collaborative programming and service initiatives
- Columbia Basin Trust: program sponsorship support
- BCAC Community Arts Council Operating Assistance
- BCAC Community Presenter Assistance: grant support for Live Kicks
- BCAC Community Arts Festival: grant support for MasqueParade
- Province of BC - Gaming: operating support

- Department Canadian Heritage Canadian Arts Presentation Funds: grant support for Live Kicks

KHC's revenue structure:

KHC	June 12/May 13 - Actual	June 13/May 14 - projected	June 14/May 15 - projected
Earned Revenues	49%	50%	50%
Private Sector Revenues	4%	5%	5%
Public Sector Revenues	47%	45%	45%
	100%	100%	100%

KHC's Champions as of October 2013:

Heroes: Fairley & Scott - The Island Restaurant - Hr Pacific - iBG-Builder-Ned Johnson - Ewan & McKenzie - Canadian Timberframes - Columbia Valley Credit Union - Golden Installations

Champions: Columbia Diesel - VP Waste Solutions Ltd - Parky's Heating & Cooling - Bacchus Books & Cafe - Golden Teacher's Association - Kicking Horse Mountain Resort - An Anonymous Donor - Olson Construction - Golden Dollar Store - Eleven 22 - Louisiana Pacific - Selkirk Electric - Dr. R. Kolbenson - Golden Lions - The River House - Black Dog Mechanical - Whistle Stop Outpost

5. June 2012 through May 2013 programming overview and highlights

- **LIVE KICKS 12/13:** 10 concerts of music, theatre and dance for fall/winter/spring season at Golden Civic Centre **PLUS:** three additional LIVE KICKS **EXTRA** concerts with: David Braid Jazz Piano (February 2013); Ziggy Marley (June 2013); and Bruce Cockburn (Aug. 2013)
- **SUMMER KICKS 2012:** 8 free outdoor concerts featuring 16 BC and Canadian emerging artists and international festival artists in the town's Spirit Square. Each concert featured one touring artist paired with one local artist. *N.B. 9 were scheduled and 1 was cancelled due to flood and highway closure.*
- **Art Gallery of Golden 12/13:** 4 group exhibits and 3 solo exhibits featuring local artists.
- **Studio Gift Shop:** ongoing exhibition and sales for 90 local and regional (Columbia Basin) artists and artisans
- **FILM KICKS 12/13:** 6 feature film nights (TIFF Film Circuit); and, Best of Banff Mountain Film Fest; and, a collaboration with Wildsight to present Pat Morrow: "Mountains - The Sacred and The Profane."
- **ICE KICKS / Snow King's MasqueParade 2013:** 3 month community arts activities with 300 participants leading up to *MasqueParade* celebration in Spirit Square attended by 1,000 audience/participants
- **GIFT KICKS 2012:** 2 day Christmas Craft Faire featuring 65 local artists and artisans attended by thousands

Highlights:

1. Snow King's MasqueParade 2013:

The MasqueParade is a community arts celebration that honours the history and cultural heritage of our mountain home. The 2.5 months of community engagement hearkens back to a time when

neighbours joined together to make their own entertainment and bring meaning to their lives through celebration. It is about nurturing the artist in all of us and creating opportunities for self-expression. This community art making process engages young and old and draws upon our cultural diversity to create a theatrical spectacle that celebrates who we are and where we live.

The MasqueParade is KHC's community arts festival culminating in February each year. It is created by a 24 person group of volunteers and community artists who dream year round to plan and animate the coming year's festival. It's important to note that Golden, as a small rural community, does not have the population base to support a critical mass of full-time professional artists. Only a handful of artists in our community can support themselves full time through their artistic practice. Given that, artistic development of the festival has grown by strategically employing the talents of experienced celebration artists and bringing them into residency here in Golden to mentor. For example, in 2008, 2009, 2010 we hired MythMakers of Nelson to come to Golden in residence and work with two dozen young adults... teens through 30s. All along, KHC has funded their professional development, rehearsal space and their materials. Now known as The A-Muse Troupe, they are writing and choreographing on their own forming an integral part of the pageant and the peripheral activities and celebrations. Similarly, through collaboration with Made in BC, we were able to create a 3 day residency in April 2011 with the dancers of Motus O and Kat Single-Dain of Dusty Flowerpot Cabaret. This residency engaged with the A-Muse Troupe, the junior group CirKids, the Golden Secondary School Drama Club, and 50 senior elementary school students. Many of those same people and students were participants in the performance aspect of our 2013 festival.

Our highlight for the February 2013 MasqueParade came about by inviting two members of the National Stiltwalkers of Canada (Edmonton) to town in December 2012 for a two day "train-the-trainer" residency to support the strong interest in this style of performance. This training catalyzed much more creative activity (prop making, costume making, story-telling, and staging) as The A-Muse Troupe created a variety of long legged characters including a flock of herons and a great horned owl to offset a closer-to-the-ground rat pack of pack rats and their hula-hooping fairy adversaries. Given the festival's growth and outreach, we are seeing our young people grow up and increase their skills and creative capacity, coming back for more challenging arts making each year. This powerful engagement with children, youth and young adults benefits our organization and our community in so many healthy ways.

2. Taking on more programming risk in our 'new' Civic Centre

As was noted last year, our 62 year old Golden Civic Centre was recently restored and transformed into a performing arts space with 300 seats and substantial lighting capacity. This increased capacity has given us the confidence to program 'bigger shows' with significantly higher production needs and challenges. However, because of our isolation, we do not have professional production staff to hire; we continue to rely upon and provide training for dedicated volunteers.

Ballet Kelowna came back to the 'new' hall for their 5th season and, given they travel with professional production crew, our volunteers gained much more hands on training. Later in the season, Flamenco Rosario's production of Mis Hermanas was not only an artistic treat but also served to build our volunteer production capacity. With simultaneous dance, music, and video projection, the production demands of the piece challenged our existing capacity. So this winter we reached out to the Banff Centre and forged a "big brother-little brother" relationship with the Centre's production staff. Under their mandate of a national training centre, the Centre provided the services of their lead Lighting tech Darrell Shaw gratis. We paid all expenses. Darrell spent 3 days with our volunteer crew of 9 helping the crew prep for Flamenco Rosario and then spent a follow-up day of training. The Centre also extended invitations to our volunteers to travel to Banff to 'shadow'

Banff Centre crews during their show days. This is further building 'best practice' capacity and an esprit de corps for our volunteers.

3. Summer Kicks series:

The success of our Summer Kicks series (and our winter MasqueParade) has been the prime catalyst for the development of this part of Golden's downtown into our Spirit Square. But, putting infrastructure aside, the way our Golden audiences and tourists turned out in record numbers this summer was a true - and gratifying - highlight. This past summer (2013) 9 concerts were scheduled, but one was cancelled when the late June floods washed out Highway 1. We schedule the concert nights mid-week so we can draw artists who are on the weekend festival circuit. Five of the eight headliners were BC artists with others coming from Denmark, Australia, and the Dominican Republic. Each performance is also supported by a "tweener" set from a local Golden musician. Now, an average of 400 people come to the square on a summer's evening creating an all-ages, picnic feel. As one visiting woman from Saskatchewan said, "Thank you for letting a stranger be part of your 'family reunion'... that's how it feels to be here." As a community arts council, that's something to be very proud of.

6. Reflection on 12/13 programming and how this informs future programming

Performing arts (Live Kicks; Summer Kicks):

All in all, it was a very successful season - both curatorial and financially. We were able to continue to pay reasonable to good artist fees (given our 300 seats) and continue to increase our audience numbers. Significantly, our Membership increased to 800. Given that membership delivers significant benefits for audiences attending our Live Kicks shows, we can take comfort and pride that the community is responding well to our curatorial and engagement choices.

We continue to present a diversity of arts discipline when we can. Sadly, theatre is still something we look for, but dance is now an established part of our programming. Ballet Kelowna returned to the hall in 12/13. We have presented the company 5 times in their 10 years. This year we added a "tea" for young people held in the hall during rehearsal for the evening's performance. BK dancers attended the tea and met with the young fans. David La Hay then held an open rehearsal as the 30 young people and adult chaperones watched in awe. We will do this again.

Flamenco Rosario's production of Mis Hermanas was not only an artistic treat but also served to build our volunteer production capacity. The production demands of the piece challenged our existing capacity, so this winter we reached out to the Banff Centre and forged a 'big brother-little brother' relationship with the Centre's production staff. The Centre "loaned" the services of their lead Lighting tech, Darrell Shaw. Darrell spent 3 days with our volunteer crew of 9 helping the crew prep for Flamenco Rosario and then spent a follow-up day of training. The Centre also extended invitations to our volunteers to travel to Banff to 'shadow' Banff Centre crews during regular show days. This is further building best practice capacity and an esprit de corps for our volunteers.

Alpha Yaya Diallo's African Music and Dance Troupe was a huge success. Coming in a day early, we were able to schedule a dance workshop/class attended by 45 people. This created great excitement for the following night's concert.

This past year, we said 'goodbye' to our long-time office manager Thelma Brown and 'hello' to our new general manager Cheryl Hurd. There's been some extra effort over this year in modifying old and establishing new systems, but we seem to have weathered the transition well. We limped through again this year with the need for additional event coordination staff. The load was still carried on the shoulders of the executive director and the general manager. However, to rectify this overwork situation, we have just firmed-up a new event coordinator position to take effect in September 2013.

This year, we did capitalize on the proximity of Juno Award winning pianist David Braid and booked him into an LK EXTRA solo show on our new grand piano attended by about 100 people. We also added two additional LIVE Kicks EXTRA performances with Ziggy Marley (June) and Bruce Cockburn (August.) Both concerts were sold out.

Upcoming season:

Our 'new' Civic Centre performing capacity informs our programming decisions as we strive to put together a diverse line-up for our indoor Live Kicks season. This 13/14 season is a first for us: featuring the performances of three dance companies and two multi-day dance residencies. Vancouver's 605 Collective will spend four days in the community this October leading up to a performance of New Animal. Three days of residency will see the company's dancers engaged in creative movement and dance activities with (we project) about 60 youth and adults. In addition, 605 Collective is travelling with their professional technical staff and will be supported by our production volunteers, furthering the professional development of our local production crew.

In November and December, Motus O dance theatre returns to Golden for their 4th residency visit prior to their performance of A Christmas Carol. The company will rehearse for 3 days with 14 local Goldenites (children and youth) incorporating them into the company for the performance on the final day. And, in April 2014, Ballet Kelowna returns for its 6th performance visit to Golden. Along with our MasqueParade community engagement, these three dance performances and residencies help support the very high priority we place on growing our audiences through a deeper understanding of the art forms we present.

The rest of the Live Kicks season is a musical mix of roots and world music: The Bills; Brickhouse; Holly & Jon; Front Porch Roots Revue; Locarno; Le Vent du Nord; The Good Lovelies. We made a couple of offers for classical music artists, but sadly we couldn't arrange a suitable date and routing. As we did in the 12/13 season, we still hope to add in an extra performance or two if a classical or jazz opportunity comes our way during the season.

Art Gallery of Golden:

The gallery and studio gift shop continues to get better and better becoming a mainstream institution for our community as well as a cultural destination for visitors. With the resources we have and with the support of leveraged funds - as we can find them - we continue to create self-produced exhibits as well as hosting solo and group shows by local/regional artists and regional galleries and museums like Touchstones Nelson and Kelowna Art Gallery. As noted in another part of the application, our own Bugaboos exhibit has just come home after a year of touring non-profit community galleries in the west and east Kootenay and into Alberta to the Whyte Museum in Banff.

We also collaborate with artists who have received project grants from the Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance to ensure that their work is exhibited in Golden and finds greater audiences. We opened our 13/14 season with Claire Dibble's Honey Honey. An upcoming exhibit from Nelson based sculptor Brent Bukowski is also a CKCA supported artist. We will also be curating solo shows for artists: Dave Best; Enid Petherick; Lynne Grilmaier; Don Konrad; and three mixed media group exhibits.

7. Additional information and highlights

Support from local small business:

At the start of our 2006 season, KHC rolled out our first Champion's Campaign. This was a pitch to local small businesses to become a sponsor with a \$500 contribution to KHC's Live Kicks season. That Campaign has grown over the years such that going into our 13/14 season we now have 18 Champions contributing \$500 each and 8 Heroes contributing \$1,000 each for a total of \$17,000. In return, they receive marketing benefits and complimentary tickets for our Live Kicks concerts. What is noteworthy about

this campaign is it gains participation from a diverse number of businesses: from professionals like lawyers, doctors, insurance companies to trades like construction, electrical, plumbers, and restaurants, cafés. Over the years, we have come to view the Champion's campaign as a pre-sale of tickets to our shows i.e. Champions give their allotment of complimentary tickets to staff, customers, friends etc. For example, if we have three Champions on a specific show, there's the possibility of 80 Champion's tickets showing up at the door that night. Given the diversity of background of our Champions we have tracked that many newcomers to our audience found their way to us the first time through a Champion's complimentary ticket. This has become a great asset in spreading our reach further into the community giving folks a taste of something that normally they would not be pre-disposed to try. Of this year's 26 Champions, 95% of them have been with us for three seasons or more and 50% have been with us from the start. As Pierre Lussier from Canadian Timberframes wrote with his \$1,000 cheque this year: "Glad to help out. We are very thankful that folks like yourselves are so devoted in developing culture in this Town which is critical to the diversity and growth of Golden."

Local government support of KHC:

In June 2013, executive director Bill Usher presented KHC's "community impact" story to the Columbia Shuswap Regional District board of elected representatives and to Tourism Golden, our local destination marketing organization. This presentation detailed the community benefit arising from local government's (town and the regional district) operating support to KHC. This support began as \$60,000 annually in 2006. In 2014, KHC will be in the last year of a 3 year agreement that delivers \$120,000 annual operating to KHC.

The positive response to executive director Bill Usher's presentation of "the Golden story" at a panel for mid-sized communities at the Union of BC Municipalities conference in September 2013 demonstrates that local government's partnership with KHC is noted as a best practice by our provincial and federal stakeholders.

Summer Kicks:

In 2006, we had an operating surplus of \$25,000 and the board voted to direct \$15,000 of those funds towards the creation of free summer programming down in the parking lot by Golden's beautiful timber frame covered bridge. That year, we produced and presented five free evening concerts under the branding "The World Comes to Play in Golden." Over the next few years, depending upon how much funding and sponsorship we could leverage, we put on anywhere from two to four concerts per summer to keep the dream alive.

It's not immodest for the arts council to say that these summer concerts along with our mid-winter MasqueParade festival brought this parking lot space to life. Enough so that the Town of Golden subsequently provided funds to build a beautiful "common" space out of that parking lot - Golden's Spirit Square. With financial support from the Province through Gaming funds and the Town of Golden, an average of 400 locals and tourists pull up their camp chairs in the Square each week throughout the summer and enjoy BC and Canadian artists as well as festival artists from the Dominican, Haiti, Columbia, Scotland, Australia, USA. This growth - from gravel parking lot to Spirit Square - along with the very real success of the Golden Civic Centre restoration as our performing arts centre, has emboldened our Town Council to approve \$350,000 to build a permanent stage and a landscaped seating structure to Spirit Square in time for our summer 2014 concerts. Architect Len Brown is the designer of the new space and structure and KHC's Bill Usher sits as a member of the advisory committee.

Gallery building renovations to increase office space:

This summer we took the big leap of faith and did intensive lease hold renovations to our office space at the back of our Art Gallery of Golden building. What was once adequate office space in the back of our building when we opened the Art Gallery of Golden in 2008 with a staff of 2.6 FTE, we have more than

outgrown. We were not sustainable in our present office configuration. Staff was working in close, cramped quarters negatively impacting our effectiveness and morale. Given the real need to add an additional full-time staff person to support the workload we already have, this renovation was crucial. We are currently awaiting the results of our grant application to the BC Arts Council to support the expense of this renovation.

Carver Policy Governance® professional development:

Since the hiring of full-time professional staff in 2007, Board directors and staff have applied efforts over the years to creating clear roles and responsibilities for governance and management. In practice, however, the board still remained involved with the executive director in oversight of programming and the executive director was still very much involved in governance. The executive director was perceived by the board and by the community as “the leader” of the organization. Both the e.d. and the board directors knew that a deeper understanding of the board’s role was needed.

The BCAC Sustainability Semester in April 2012 was especially timely. Three board members and the executive director made the trip to Nelson to attend. Subsequently, we booked a Skype session with the whole board in which Sandra Thompson delivered her workshop on Governance.

During Fall 2012, both the chair and the e.d. reviewed various models and policy documents practised by arts organizations in Canada. At some point in this very long process/journey, John Carver’s model for [Policy Governance®](#) caught our attention. In committee, we compared that with other models in practice, and ultimately a recommendation was accepted by the board to enter into professional training with Richard Stringham, an associate with [The Governance Coach](#). KHC invited 5 additional community leaders to attend the meetings with KHC board and staff, and all gathered for four full day seminars spread out over April and May 2013. The board has now adopted a Policy Manual document that requires monthly policy monitoring reports from both the e.d. and the board. This very long process has raised the bar in our community for governance in non-profits. It remains a detailed and demanding process, and we have retained Richard Stringham as our “coach” for this year to help us with the proper implementation of the model.



Volunteer Appreciation - Thank You Event:

The board led and hosted a volunteer appreciation event in April 2013 which was a special invite-only concert by Rick Scott attended by about 125 volunteers and Champion supporters. The board wined and dined the guests and all were entertained by ‘busking animation’ from members of our A-Muse Troupe and the concert performance from Rick Scott. A poem entitled “I am the volunteer” was commissioned from Caleb Moss and the poem was printed on an image from one of our concerts. This was made into a magnet and given to each of our volunteers as a thank you souvenir during the evening.

In closing

With imagination, entrepreneurial spirit, a professional work ethic and passionate volunteer work as our strengths, Kicking Horse Culture continues to leverage significant third-party dollars and earned revenues

to create diverse, year-round programming and services to create excitement and pride in the arts and culture of our community.

Since 2005, when our board first went to the Town of Golden and the CSRD (Kicking Horse Country) to ask for operating funding, we made, and have stuck to the following three promises as our core goals:

- to partner with Kicking Horse Country, our provincial, federal, corporate funders and our audiences to deliver a vibrant, year-round palette of cultural activity that will make “where” and “how” we live an “attraction”
- to use cultural activity as a catalyst to build upon and enhance our local traditions and further develop a strong “sense of place”
- to help fuel pride in community, social & economic development, tourism and the very real feeling that this is “a great place to live and visit”

KHC’s growth these past 9 years - from a budget of \$50,000 and 35 members to a budget over \$500,000 and 800 members - goes hand in hand with the Town of Golden’s strategic priorities affirming “arts and culture” as one of its 5 budget priorities for 2014. For the 4th year in a row, KHC has been ranked by our community arts council peers in the top handful of 75 community arts councils in the province.

Mayor Christina Benty said in this September’s presentation to the Union of BC Municipalities,

“The contribution of arts and culture to our community’s quality of life cannot be overstated. KHC deserves all the accolades for their outstanding performance in leveraging funds to provide the quality of service they deliver.”

Councillor Caleb Moss has written his support,

“KHC continues to perform at an exceptional level. With an entrepreneurial flare and committed, consistent, dependable, and dynamic delivery, KHC continues to be a huge and necessary part of our community’s daily heartbeat. Local government has developed a highly functional symbiotic relationship with KHC. As local government leaders, we have come not only to count on KHC to deliver top drawer service, but also have come to rely upon them as our regional “de facto” cultural services department. This trust has manifested itself in increasing our support and entering into a multi-year funding agreement. This not only aids KHC in long term planning and development, but provides us as local government the security in knowing we can rely on this dynamic organization over the longer term.”

Respectfully submitted,



Bill Usher

Executive Director