

From: "K. Schulz" <kschulz@mts.net>
Subject: **BLOCK PARTY - Winnipeg Free Press**
Date: February 22, 2011 9:10:09 PM CST (CA)
To: Karen Schulz <kschulz@mts.net>

[Mobile](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [E-Editions](#) | [PressCard](#) | [Photo Store](#) | [Flyers](#) | [Customer Service](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Publications](#) | [Advertising](#) | [Contests](#) | [Store](#) | [Place an Ad](#)

Winnipeg Free Press



[SEARCH](#) | [Advanced Search](#) | [Archives](#)

August 12, 2010

RECYCLING DAY 2

- [NEWS](#)
 - [ENTERTAINMENT](#)
 - [BUSINESS](#)
 - [SPORTS](#)
 - [LIFE & STYLE](#)
 - [TRAVEL](#)
 - [OPINION](#)
 - [MEDIA](#)
 - [FEATURES](#)
 - [CELEBRATIONS](#)
 - [CAREERS](#)
 - [OBITUARIES](#)
- [BREAKING NEWS](#) | [THE ARTS](#) | [BOOKS](#) | [MOVIES](#) | [MUSIC](#) | [RESTAURANT REVIEWS](#) | [TV](#) | [THE TAB](#) | [COMICS](#) | [PUZZLES](#) | [UPCOMING EVENTS](#)

[Winnipeg Free Press](#) > [Entertainment](#) > [The Arts](#) > [BLOCK PARTY](#)

THE ARTS

Winnipeg Free Press - PRINT EDITION

BLOCK PARTY

First Fridays program aims to bring gallery-goers and other culturally curious folks into the Exchange after hours

By: Allison Mayes

Posted: 5/08/2010 1:00 AM | [Comments: 4](#)

- [PRINT](#)
- [E-MAIL](#)
- [SHARE THIS](#)
- [REPORT ERROR](#)



[A](#) [A](#) [A](#) Make text: [Larger](#) | [Smaller](#)

TOP JOBS

26 - 30 of 41

[PREVIOUS](#) [NEXT](#)

[OUTSIDE SALES STAFF](#)
ELITE

[MULTI-UNIT OPERATIONS MANAGER](#)
TIM HORTONS

[INDUSTRIAL MILLWRIGHT/MECHANIC](#)
MAPLE LEAF

[CAREER IN REAL ESTATE](#)
ROYAL LEPAGE

[EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR](#)
UNITED CHURCH HALFWAY HOMES INC.

[All Jobs](#)

OUR COMMUNITIES



JANEK LOWE / WINNIPEG FREE PRESS [Enlarge Image](#)

Organizers Karen Schulz (left) and Sue Gordon hope to see crowded streets on First Fridays.

If you build it, they will come.

So if you switch on lights and throw open doors, will hundreds of people start checking out art galleries, artists' studios and funky boutiques in the Exchange District on designated Friday nights?



[Enlarge Image](#)

Will they stop to eat and drink while wandering the historic, culture-infused neighbourhood, then spread the word so the idea gathers momentum?

That's the vision behind First Fridays, a new, year-round program aimed at creating a vibrant scene in the Exchange from 5 to 9 p.m. on the first Friday of every month.

First Fridays was launched in July, so this Friday marks the second event. It has the support of the Exchange District BIZ and the Residents of the Exchange District organization.

Dozens of businesses have committed to being open -- a distinct change from the norm, which sees Exchange shops and galleries closing at 6 p.m. on Fridays.

Volunteer organizers Sue Gordon and Karen Schulz are upbeat visual artists in their 50s who have studios in the Hammond Building at 63 Albert St. The only money they've received to promote First Fridays so far is a tiny grant of \$150 from city councillor Harvey Smith.

They're using an image by artist Mike Carroll of a turned-on light switch as the logo for First Fridays. Schulz playfully altered a photo of a corporate billboard, visible from her studio window, into an imaginary billboard for First Fridays and posted it on the program's website.

The pair is putting the word out that First Fridays could involve any art form, including dance, theatre, music or comedy.

"We'd love to see businesses that don't have anything to do with the arts open up for First Fridays and hang art, have a poetry reading or a fashion show, or host a musician," says Gordon.

"Every business can be part of this -- every café, shop and restaurant," adds Schulz.

Gordon got the idea from First Fridays in Kansas City, Mo., a city with a metropolitan-area population of more than two million that she visits regularly with her husband. About five summers ago, they stumbled on a First Friday there in the arts district called the Crossroads.

"I was totally amazed at the number of people who were lining up to get into art openings, artists' studios, cafes, bars," Gordon remembers. "The whole area was packed."

The couple have returned several times. "Kansas City has made their arts district approachable by doing this," Gordon says.

First Fridays is a phenomenon that has swept the United States. Usually called gallery walks, hops or crawls, the free events are held in cultural districts of cities such as Philadelphia, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Denver, Louisville and San Antonio.

In most cities, the program started modestly and has taken off so dramatically that many galleries now schedule show openings and artists' talks for the first Friday of the month, and lay out wine and cheese. Some cities offer free "art buses" or trolleys. Some publish maps of all the stops.

In Canada, Red Deer and Sarnia have launched First Fridays. Calgary does something similar with First Thursdays.

Winnipeg's Platform Centre for Photographic and Digital Arts in the Artspace building will be open Friday night with two new shows on view: the Eritrean Video Art Project and works by artists experimenting with pinhole photography. Its director-curator, J.J. Kegan McFadden, says he welcomes

POLL

Will you watch "Queen Elizabeth in 3D"?

- Yes! I can't wait to pick up my royal 3D glasses.
- I saw the Queen in 3D when she was here this summer.
- I wouldn't watch it even in 2D. Or 1D.

[Submit my Vote](#)

[View Results](#)

MOST POPULAR

[MOST VIEWS](#) [MOST COMMENTS](#) [MOST EMAILS](#)

[TODAY](#) | [WEEK](#) | [MONTH](#)

1. [Pedestrian dies after collision with truck](#)
2. [Woman pays heavy price for trying to open door on flight](#)
3. [True North unveils new exhibition hall](#)
4. [Home deemed unliveable after grow op found](#)
5. [Ex-Hells Angel a free man](#)
6. [Former Hells Angel gets deal in bar homicide](#)
7. [Medical school training programs under scrutiny](#)
8. [Would you support or oppose a plan to move a group home for developmentally delayed individuals next door to your home?](#)
9. [One person seriously hurt in crash near Ste. Anne](#)
10. [Fishing for Goldeyes' finances](#)

EVENTS

August 12, 2010

[View all Events](#)

any initiative that attracts foot traffic at night for something other than "bar tourism."

Gordon and Schulz agree that bars and nightclubs are currently the neighbourhood's biggest draws on weekend nights, which leaves some Winnipeggers nervous about their safety. But the pair have always found the area safe. They emphasize that the galleries and businesses are concentrated within a few blocks, so they have faith that Winnipeggers will come out even in January weather.

The pair have gone door-to-door in the Exchange to talk up the program. In doing so, they have discovered art activity even they didn't know about.

For instance, across the street from their own building they found the Manitoba Institute of Sculptors and Artists, where an older sculptor who was in the middle of a project came to the door wearing a mask, covered with dust. "I thought they were defunct," Gordon says of the group.

Doug Shand, owner of Vintage Glory on Albert Street, says the Exchange is currently a "ghost town" for retailers after 6 p.m. But he saw during the recent Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival how profoundly a critical mass of people can affect business.

For the first time during the fringe, Albert and Arthur streets were closed to traffic between Bannatyne and McDermot avenues.

"My store was completely packed, every day for the whole fringe festival," says the vintage clothing dealer. "I sold probably 10 times the amount that I usually do. (The street closure) was the best thing that ever happened to the area."

Shand says only about six people came into Vintage Glory during the inaugural First Friday on July 2, but he's more than willing to commit to the program in hopes that it will catch on. He suggests that live music at the Cube in Old Market Square would help enliven First Fridays.

Any Exchange organization, artist or business that wants to participate can download and print a sign from the website www.firstfridayswinnipeg.org, put it out on a sandwich board, and open its doors.

Gordon and Schulz say they know it can be intimidating to walk into an art gallery alone. One of the reasons First Fridays has been so successful in other cities is that it surrounds newcomers with a lively crowd, so they feel more at ease.

"There's less risk when there's lots of people," says Schulz.

alison.mayes@freepress.mb.ca

ART PREVIEW

First Fridays in the Exchange

Friday from 5 to 9 p.m.

Republished from the Winnipeg Free Press print edition August 5, 2010 D1

[PRINT](#) [E-MAIL](#) [SHARE THIS](#) [REPORT ERROR](#)

4 Comments

POSTED BY: **Stu_c**
AUGUST 11, 2010 AT 11:52 AM

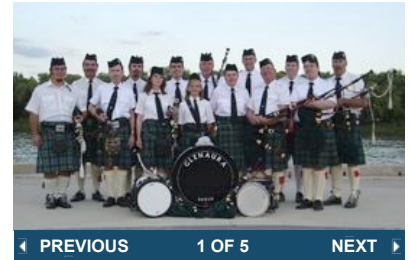
I agree with Shand that the stage should be incorporated more into the event. I bet there are loads of local musicians that would be happy to play. It's just starting out so it could take some time to catch on but if it was promoted more of an event worth going and checking out, rather than just places being open later it could really be good for the area. It would be good if some of the streets were closed off to become pedestrian malls as well. Right now there's sort of a clothing designer market on Sundays maybe (don't remember which weekend day it is), but I think it would be good for them to also participate in First Fridays if they aren't already. It's not easy to get people to the area in the evenings so you really need coordination between organizers of some of these things instead of different groups doing their own thing. This is at least a good start and something to build off of.

[REPORT ABUSIVE COMMENT](#)

POSTED BY: **lady berrington**
AUGUST 10, 2010 AT 9:36 PM

sounds like a FAB idea!!!

[REPORT ABUSIVE COMMENT](#)



Glenaura Pipes And Drums

Concert in the Park: For over twenty years, the Glenaura Pipes and Drums have thrilled audiences in Canada and the U.S. Outfitted in their outstanding MacLeod tartan, the dress and deportment of the band carries ...

[\[View Full Event information \]](#)

THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED
12	13	14	15	16	17	18

POSTED BY: **Chris**
AUGUST 5, 2010 AT 10:29 AM

What a great idea! I will attend and bring my family too.

When we were at the Fringe and saw the throngs of people on Albert and Arthur Streets, we thought that is exactly what Winnipeg needs all year around. Some patio seating in the summer, and stores, boutiques, and galleries open in the evening.

Corydon Ave is busy day and night -- the Exchange would be even lovelier and livelier with its beautiful and historic buildings, and their vibrant arts community.

As for safety, you are probably more likely to slip and fall in your own bathtub than get bothered by the Bogeyman in the Exchange.

[REPORT ABUSIVE COMMENT](#)

POSTED BY: **Me4Mayor**
AUGUST 5, 2010 AT 10:20 AM

SO excited!!! This should be great. The Fringe is the best time of year in the city and things like this will help to keep the vibe happening all year round. Kudos to the organizers for bringing such a cool idea to the coolest part of the city. Can't wait!!

[REPORT ABUSIVE COMMENT](#)

The comment period for this story has ended.

FOLLOW



EARLUG: BREAKING NEWS ALERTS

Sign up for our new Breaking News Alerts



BREAKING NEWS ALERTS

Sign up for our new Breaking News Alerts



EDITOR'S BULLETIN

Sign up for daily bulletins



WINNIPEG ROAD CLOSURES

Check if your commute is affected



BLOGS TO WATCH

We pick our favourite local blogs for you to follow



BREAKING NEWS WIDGET

Create and embed a Winnipeg Free Press breaking news widget on your site or blog

ADS BY GOOGLE

[Digital Art & Design](#)

Get your Degree in Graphic Design, Digital Media, & Digital Art.
www.FullSail.edu

[Back to Top](#)

[Return to The Arts](#)

General: [Contact Us](#) | [History](#) | [Advertising](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [PressCard](#) | [Sponsorship](#) | [Subscribe](#)

On-line: [RSS Feeds](#) | [E-Editions](#) | [Archives](#) | [Photo Store](#)

Related: [Newspaper in Education](#) | [Autos](#) | [Homes](#) | [Stuff](#) | [Celebrations](#) | [Careers](#) | [Obituaries](#) | [FP Newspapers Income Fund](#) | [Manitoba Press Council](#)

Winnipeg Free Press

© 2010 Winnipeg Free Press. All Rights Reserved.

powered by
 Clickability