



PHOTOS BY RON WOLF

Sherrie Christiansen and Vi Plumridge talk business at the Sites and Scenes of Borderland booth at the Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce 22nd annual Home and Leisure Show.

Home show big event

BY RON WOLF

IT could have been the rainy weather outside, it could have been the spring fever residents of Fort Frances were experiencing, but for me, the Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce 22nd annual Home and Leisure Show was the first real social event of the year. The thought of those free samples was intriguing as well.

The booths at Memorial Sports Centre were as varied as the people who attended the show. Everything from meeting Treaty Three Police to sitting in the newest fishing boat was offered.

This year's theme was Embracing the Green Revolution, Think Globally, Act Locally.

Landscaping, carpeting, flooring, windows and doors, insulation, cabinetry and furniture; organic food and clothing, artwork and photography, home decorating, local food, water coolers and filtration; cellular and broadband service were all featured. I think I even saw a kitchen sink in the mix.

Badiuk Equipment and Pinewood Sports & Marine set up in in the '52 Canadians Arena.

Two displays stood out the most in my eyes. Independent Living Resource Centre Thunder Bay's goals are to maintain an Independent Living Resource Centre that will encourage self-determination, self-help, and participation of all persons with a disability in the community and region. To deliver personalized programs and services that develop and enhance individual skills and knowledge associated with independent living. To provide opportunities for personal growth and development through volunteer peer support programs, attendant care management courses, and information and referral services. To promote public education about independent living and work towards identification and elimination of barriers towards independent living. The mission is to promote ability and independence within an inclusive community.

Josh Valley, outreach co-ordinator of the Investing in Futures Program for the past three years, was on hand to promote the centre and to answer questions. "We are trying help families with young children as well as people with disabilities so they can receive money from the government and help save for the future," said Valley.

He said it was his first time at the Fort Frances show. "It's excellent; it's probably the biggest one I've been to in the region." He's been at shows from Geraldton to Kenora.

He said the display was popular. "We are giving away apples, growth charts, stress balls (which look like apples). It's a good way to inform the people about the programs that we



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Josh Valley mans the Independent Living Resource Centre booth.

have to offer," he said.

"This is the last year doing the programs, so we may not have the funding to continue it," added Valley.

Meanwhile, Vi Plumridge of Fort Frances caught my eye with her Sites and Scenes of Borderland booth.

For the past 30 years she has been painting scenes of Borderland. What she never saw inspired her to go into business.

"When I went uptown I didn't see anything for a souvenir about Fort Frances." She did see the odd Canadian flag, but not much more. So she decided to incorporate her paintings into souvenirs such as mugs, key chains, cards, paintings and shirts. "So many (buildings) are gone now, so it's a way to preserve the history of Fort Frances," she said.

The Hallet, The lookout Tower, Sorting Gap Marina, the current library and Robert Moore School, are just a few places she paints. The Ukrainian church is selling really well and Robert Moore School is closing, so it will be using her souvenirs. The Hallet bringing logs to the Sorting Gap inspired her to paint.

All prints have been produced locally.

Ron Wolf's column appears every other Tuesday.