



RON WOLF

Visual communication workshop facilitator Valerie Larson shows a group how to take their vision and turn it into art.

Rug project promotes pride

BY RON WOLF

IF YOU want a job done, leave it to a group of dedicated citizens to bring the town together.

Last Wednesday evening at the Fort Frances Museum a question was asked to a group of about 17 participants. What makes people stay in the Rainy River Sunset Region or what hooks us here? The Ontario Craft Council has given Fort Frances a \$1,500 grant for a community project to get together and make a community rug to answer that question.

A key part of consultation for the project was the completion of a questionnaire, which was handed to about 17 workshop participants and the local girl guides group.

Among the questions were:

- What is a fond memory that you have either as a child or an adult or both?
- Do you have a spot you like to sit and watch the water, or people or just have down time? Where is it?
- When you go for a walk, where do you like to go? Is it along the water, in the woods, down main street?
- What do you do for fun? If you leave for the winter, what brings you back here?

The Ontario Craft Council is a not-for-profit arts service organization based in Ontario which was founded in 1976 through the merger of the Canadian Guild of Crafts and the Ontario Craft Foundation. It is an umbrella organization whose aim is to encourage the development, marketing and preservation of crafts.

The council runs programs to



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help develop the careers of craft professionals. To date, over 98 scholars have received Ontario Craft Council scholarships, and over 400 craftspeople received grants or awards.

At the meeting the participants were encouraged to participate and a brain-storming session ensued. Ideas for the community rug included the water, fishing, the changes of the seasons, and of course the sunset for sunset country. From the girl guides, a member suggested a pie cooling at a window ledge was one of her fondest memories. Later in the meeting Joy Legaree of Fort Frances brought in 70-year-old rug which her grandmother made.

Valerie Larson, a visual communication workshop facilitator, along with Fort Frances Museum curator Pam Cain, kicked off the meeting. Larson demonstrated how to put your ideas for the rug onto paper in an artistic way. This will be an ongoing community involved event which will take several months to complete.

Ron Wolf is a freelance writer who resides in Fort Frances. Rainy River District Notes appears every other Tuesday.