



TOURISM WINNIPEG

HOSTS THE

**2012 WINNIPEG TOURISM
AWARDS OF DISTINCTION**

PRESENTED BY



THURSDAY, MAY 10, 2012 | THE FORT GARRY HOTEL



GREETINGS FROM MAYOR SAM KATZ

As Mayor of Winnipeg, it is with great pleasure that I extend greetings to everyone attending the Winnipeg Tourism Awards of Distinction, hosted by Tourism Winnipeg.

Our tourism industry brings visitors into our city, delivers an outstanding experience and enhances the city of Winnipeg's economic growth. Tourism Winnipeg, under the umbrella of Economic Development Winnipeg, performs an essential role in helping to brand Winnipeg as an ideal location for travellers, meetings, conventions, and sporting and special events.

This inaugural awards event is a celebration of the people and organizations with a vision for what tourism in Winnipeg can achieve. They are the ones who help create the one-of-a-kind experiences that leave visitors with positive memories of our city and the people who live here.

On behalf of my colleagues on City Council, I would like to thank Tourism Winnipeg for its creativity in continually promoting the best that Winnipeg has to offer. Best wishes to all of this year's participants and distinguished recipients.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam Katz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sam Katz,
MAYOR



MESSAGE FROM TOURISM WINNIPEG

Welcome to the inaugural Winnipeg Tourism Awards of Distinction. Tourism Winnipeg created this awards program to recognize tourism successes, innovation, and service excellence, and reward those who have made significant contributions to the industry. The Winnipeg Tourism Awards of Distinction demonstrate the value of tourism and showcase how people are the greatest asset a destination can have.

This awards program is also designed to promote the industry's recent achievements and encourage people to strive for excellence. By working together, we can enhance the visitor experience and better showcase Winnipeg as a destination.

As we gather to celebrate today, we would like to sincerely congratulate all nominees, finalists and winners. Your energy, passion, expertise, professionalism, creativity, leadership and innovation push Winnipeg's tourism industry forward, creating unparalleled results.

On behalf of the management and staff at Tourism Winnipeg, we congratulate all participants for their inspirational work and look forward to future endeavours.

Warm regards,

Marina R. James,
president and CEO,
Economic Development
Winnipeg Inc.

Chantal Sturk-Nadeau,
senior vice-president,
Tourism Winnipeg



Winnipeg...

Where two ancient waterways
Melt into each other
On their journey to the inland sea

At the place of their meeting...a meeting place
A gathering ground of early peoples
An arrival point for new beginnings

Multi-coloured roots run deep
In the richness of this place
A place to build a future

Winnipeg...

I am her...she is me

ABOUT THE ARTIST | Ken Hildebrand MAA, MRAIC, MSA

Introduction

It is an honour and a privilege to design the Winnipeg Tourism Award.
Winnipeg...my lifelong love, my lifelong home

Artist's Statement

The words and images flow from an unseen place.
My only gift, is to hold the brush and the pen.

Art/Architecture

Member of:

- Manitoba Association of Architects
- Royal Architectural Institute of Canada
- Manitoba Society of Artists
- Assiniboia Group of Artists

Tourism

- Travel Manitoba (1984-2005)
- Manitoba Tourism Secretariat (2005-2011)

Tourism Milestones

- Manitoba visitor information centre redevelopment
- Manitoba Star Attractions program
- Manitoba Aboriginal Tourism Strategy
- Waabonong Anishinaabe Interpretive and Learning Centre, Hollow Water, MB

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landscape architects & planners

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THE FORT GARRY
HOTEL, SPA AND CONFERENCE CENTRE



FLORAL ELEMENTS

Inn at the Forks

MENU

Butterlettuce Salad with Orange,
Almonds and Poppyseed Dressing
Grilled Chicken Breast with Teriyaki Sauce
White and Wild Rice Pilaf
Chef's Choice of Hot Seasonal Vegetable
Fresh Fruit Tart

OPENING GREETINGS

Emcee Ace Burpee
Marina James, President & CEO,
Economic Development Winnipeg Inc.

WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR

His Worship Mayor Sam Katz

WELCOME FROM PRESENTING SPONSOR

Manitoba Lotteries Corporation

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Winnipeg Airports Authority Inc.

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by HR Inc.

BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by RBC Royal Bank

LEADER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Canad Inns

INFLUENCER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Winnipeg Convention Centre

MARKETING CAMPAIGN (UNDER \$2500) AWARD

Presented by Travel Manitoba

MARKETING CAMPAIGN (OVER \$2500) AWARD

Presented by Travel Manitoba

INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Scatliff+Miller+Murray

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Presented by Tourism Winnipeg

CLOSING

Emcee Ace Burpee
Chantal Sturk-Nadeau, Senior Vice President,
Tourism Winnipeg

WINNIPEG TOURISM AWARD OF DISTINCTION

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

SPONSORED BY



WINNIPEG
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY

Presented to a volunteer in the hospitality industry who demonstrated service excellence by going above and beyond in order to provide outstanding service that enhanced a visitor's experience for increased customer satisfaction.

AWARD NOMINEES

ANNETTE EIBNER, MANITOBA MARATHON

Six years ago Manitoba Marathon runner Annette Eibner hung up her running shoes and refocused her race-weekend energies to becoming one of the organization's most dedicated and indefatigable volunteers. Every year, she signs up for volunteer duty six months in advance. During race weekend, she comes early, stays late and is never without a smile on her face and a kind word for staff, other volunteers and the runners themselves. She is a one-woman welcome wagon, problem solver, team player and spirit booster. As her nominator says, "It is the beautiful spirit and character of people like Annette Eibner that enhance our lives, our event, our world, reminding us that kindness, hospitality and generosity do exist."

GARY DAY, THE MANITOBA MUSEUM

Gary Day doesn't just talk and walk the part, he dresses the part. As a volunteer host and on-the-spot history teacher aboard The Manitoba Museum's Nonsuch, the retired teacher wears his own hand-made period costume to provide visitors with an even more authentic experience. A twice-weekly volunteer for the past decade, Gary was also onboard the Nonsuch when popstar Justin Bieber and his girlfriend Selina Gomez visited. This loyal and passionate volunteer entertained the couple with a quick history lesson before their private dinner. At after-hours conferences and special events, Gary entertains local, national and international visitors with his "sea tales," acting as a shining ambassador not only for the museum but for the city and province too.

GEORGE EINARSON, TOURISME RIEL

For 30 years and counting George Einarson has embraced and embodied the joie de vivre of Festival du Voyageur and passed on that same enthusiasm to countless festival goers. As head of the hosting committee for the last 20 years, George has made it his mission to give the 120 visiting dignitaries from international festivals the time of their lives. He is the host with the most, arranging their itineraries, all meals and accommodations, special tours and shopping trips and satisfying any requests, big or small. George's passion for volunteerism doesn't stop with the Festival. He is also a long-time volunteer with Shriner's, Juvenile Diabetes, the Teddy Bear's Picnic, sporting events like the Pan Am Games and two World Curling Championships and the United Way, among many other organizations.

WINNIPEG TOURISM AWARD OF DISTINCTION

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

SPONSORED BY



Presented to a front-line employee in the hospitality industry who demonstrated service excellence by going above and beyond in order to provide outstanding service that enhanced a visitor's experience for increased customer satisfaction.

AWARD NOMINEES

STEPHEN ANHALT, HILTON SUITES WINNIPEG AIRPORT

Stephen Anhalt's co-workers call him "Mr. Utility" for his uncanny ability to solve any problem, fulfill any guest request and get any job done. In the thick of things, Stephen always keeps his positive attitude and is a favourite among staff. As the lead guest services associate, Stephen is a true hospitality superstar and regularly receives glowing compliments from countless guests. Stephen can always put a name to a face, remembers special requests for returning guests and is the go-to guy for any problem. More than just an outstanding representative of the hotel, Stephen is an outstanding representative for Winnipeg.

ROLANDO PASCUA, THE FAIRMONT WINNIPEG

Officially, Rolando Pascua is a senior front desk agent at The Fairmont Winnipeg. Unofficially, he is the ultimate welcoming committee, jack of all trades and heart and soul of the team. He greets regulars by their first name and makes new guests feel as if they're coming home. He jumps in to help without hesitation and comes in early and stays late when emergencies arise. He is the epitome of cool, calm and collected. Ronaldo is also professional, always positive and embodies the company's service promises. As one guest says, "He is the best front desk guy we've ever seen."

HEATHER PEDREIRA, HEARTLAND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL & TOURS

Need to figure out how to entertain dozens of group travellers at the last minute? Call Heather Pedreira. As a 25-year employee of Heartland Travel, Heather has been the idea woman behind many of the company's amazing tours that showcase Winnipeg's best in arts, culture, food and history. At a moment's notice, Heather takes over the coordinating, booking and guiding reins. She does it all with grace and verve. Exceptional customer service, expertise and enthusiasm are always the name of Heather's game. As her boss says, "If there is an example of a perfect employee, Heather is the one."

WINNIPEG TOURISM AWARD OF DISTINCTION

BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



RBC Royal Bank®

Presented to a tourism business, facility, event or attraction that provided exceptional visitor experiences that resulted in high levels of customer satisfaction through product development and/or services.

AWARD NOMINEES

HEARTLAND TRAVEL AND TOURS

Heartland International Travel & Tours knows how to show visitors a good time. When Food Banks Canada held their national conference in Winnipeg in 2011, Heartland's owner Don Finkbeiner showed delegates true Winnipeg hospitality. Don met many of his tour guests personally at their hotel, changed tour agendas on the fly, and made sure every detail was done right. As he helped plan the city tour itinerary, his love and pride of Winnipeg were instantly apparent. Don gushed about Winnipeg's best places and through Heartland's multitude of innovative and educational tours he showed visitors how to best experience our city.

MUDDY WATER TOURS

For the past decade, death and tragedy, and the macabre mixed with odd bits of Winnipeg history have made Muddy Water Tours the leader in so-called "dark tourism." Through storytelling, theatrics and history lessons, owner Kristen Verin-Treusch brings scandalous tales to life, enlightening visitors to the city's often unknown past. The company is passionately committed to preserving history and inspiring youth to learn about local history. Verin-Treusch also created the Spirit Seekers conference to raise money for CancerCare. She takes every opportunity to spread her love of Winnipeg, promoting Dalvanert, St. Boniface and The Forks to guests.

TRUE NORTH SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT

The Winnipeg Jets returned home in 2011, thanks to True North Sports and Entertainment. But that was just the beginning. The company's MTS Exhibition Hall hosted three major exhibits—Bodies, Titanic Artifacts and Da Vinci—which attracted more than 200,000 visitors. At the MTS Iceplex, 20,000 people watched future NHL stars hit the ice during the Under-17 World Hockey Championships. At Canad Inns Stadium, True North presented U2 for 47,000 rock fans, making it Manitoba's largest concert. The company also started the Winnipeg Jets True North Foundation to give money to charitable groups that help youth embrace healthy living.

WINNIPEG TOURISM AWARD OF DISTINCTION

LEADER OF THE YEAR

SPONSORED BY



Presented to an individual who contributed to growing Winnipeg's tourism industry.

AWARD NOMINEES

MARK CHIPMAN & DAVID THOMSON, TRUE NORTH SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Mark Chipman and David Thomson of True North Sports & Entertainment make great things happen. In 2004, the duo opened the MTS Centre, a concert venue for major artists and home ice for the Manitoba Moose. And then the Winnipeg Jets came home. Today, MTS Centre and its Jets, play key roles in Winnipeg's ongoing business and cultural renaissance. Mark and David are true entrepreneurial visionaries who have helped position Winnipeg as a leading tourism destination in North America. Their accomplishments have sparked the city's new 'can-do' attitude, renewed hometown pride and attracted media attention from hockey fans throughout the world.

MICHAEL PALLIE, RAVEN COMICS

Michael Pallie doesn't technically have super powers but he can make just about anything happen. As owner of Raven Comics, Michael is also the brains and brawn behind Central Canada Comic Con. He plans, promotes and books convention headliners like last year's star, William Shatner. Michael also sits on the boards of Norwood Grove BIZ and Downtown Winnipeg BIZ and volunteers at many other festivals. He selflessly shares his time, knowledge and ideas with other local groups to help make their events successful too. He is an avowed Winniepegger who works hard to make his city an even better place.

GARTH ROGERSON, RED RIVER EXHIBITION ASSOCIATION

In 2011, 233,183 people attended the 10-day Red River Exhibition, setting a new attendance record. That feat was made possible by the efforts, leadership and vision of exhibition CEO Garth Rogerson. Garth initiated and oversaw the completion of the new 39,000 square-foot Exhibition Place. The facility is now one of Winnipeg's top-rated trade and consumer show spaces. But he's not stopping there. He envisions a multi-use entertainment district with an events centre, hotel, retail space and outdoor recreational facilities. In the meantime, Garth continues to expand programming to ensure the 61-year-old Exhibition's longevity, viability and continuing contribution to the community.

WINNIPEG TOURISM AWARD OF DISTINCTION **MEETING, CONVENTION OR EVENT INFLUENCER OF THE YEAR**

SPONSORED BY



Presented to an individual, organization or business that was influential in bringing a meeting, convention and/or event to Winnipeg, resulting in increased visitation.

AWARD NOMINEES

ADRIAN BRUCE, UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG WESMEN WRESTLING

Adrian Bruce makes any mission possible. As the president of Manitoba Amateur Wrestling, Bruce brought the Canadian Qualification Wrestling Trials to the University of Winnipeg in December 2011. Adrian was a powerful force on all fronts including fundraising, marketing, sponsorship, athlete support, volunteer recruitment and getting local and national media coverage. His sole purpose? Conduct the best possible event and give athletes, coaches and trainers, and their family and friends a great experience in anticipation of the 2012 Olympic Games. The event was a fabulous showcase for wrestling and raised Winnipeg's profile as an outstanding venue for world-class events.

MYRON PAWLOWSKY, INTL ASSOC. OF COMMERCIAL ADMINISTRATORS

Myron Pawlowsky takes care of business. In June 2011, Myron hosted the 34th annual conference for the International Association of Commercial Administrators in Winnipeg. As president of the organization, Myron worked tirelessly with the board to promote the conference, drive attendance up and manage requests for financial assistance for travel. Myron's event not only met its mandate for providing valuable information to attendees but also gave them a taste of Winnipeg as a possible future vacation destination. In the end, the conference attracted 145 delegates from around the world and infused an estimated \$184,000 to the local economy.

SCAPPS 2011 ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

The annual conference for the Canadian Society for the Psychomotor Learning and Sport Psychology brings together the brightest minds in the field. In October 2011, 220 scholars and students converged on Winnipeg from around the globe. The local organizing committee—Leisha Stachan, Steven Passmore, Adrienne-Leslie Toogood, Cheryl Passmore and Melanie Gregg—made it happen. The team's members, all from the Universities of Winnipeg and Manitoba and the Canadian Sport Centre Manitoba, banded together to deliver a first-class conference. Besides meetings, the committee organized a reception, the AGM luncheon, a euchre tournament and a "run about town"—a guided run and history lesson around The Forks and the Exchange District.

WINNIPEG TOURISM AWARD OF DISTINCTION

MARKETING CAMPAIGN (UNDER \$2500)



SPONSORED BY

Presented to an individual, organization, business or marketing consortium in recognition of a creative or innovative marketing campaign that resulted in increased visitation.

AWARD NOMINEES

PARK THEATRE CAFE

Owner Erick Casselman wanted a sell-out crowd for a concert by Vancouver indie band Said the Whale. With a limited marketing budget, he went on a social media blitz, reaching out to the Park's 3,000 followers on Twitter and Facebook. He fired off a promotional e-newsletter and created a YouTube-style viral video. Erick also partnered with the band to print and place 300 posters around Winnipeg neighbourhoods and campuses. The concert sold out and 89 people were turned away. Through other similar marketing campaigns, Erick has made the Park one of Winnipeg's most unique and successful venues.

WEST END BIZ

Murals in the West End highlight the area's vibrant multiculturalism and long history, while deterring graffiti and building community pride. The West End BIZ's guided mural tour also introduced visitors and locals to the area. To promote the mural tour, brochures were placed in hotels and tourist centres, and advertisements ran in local publications. The program was pushed on the BIZ's website and social media. Free tours were given as part of "Jane's Walk" and "Doors Open Winnipeg." The program broke even. But the real value was seen in other ways—locals and visitors said they saw it as a community to live, work and play.

EXCHANGE DISTRICT BIZ

Hollywood has had a long love affair with the Exchange District. In 2011, the Exchange District BIZ introduced Real to Reel, a new walking tour about the rich history of film-making in the neighbourhood. Ads were placed in the Winnipeg Free Press, Downtown Winnipeg magazine and on the 201 Portage Avenue media panel. BIZ used its own e-newsletter and website to get the message out. The result? Online traffic jumped to 3,700 hits during July and August. Kids from 20-plus school groups toured the district. And individual tour bookings spiked with 2,200 sight-seers wandering through the Exchange District.

WINNIPEG TOURISM AWARD OF DISTINCTION

MARKETING CAMPAIGN (OVER \$2500)

Travel
Manitoba

SPONSORED BY



Presented to an individual, organization, business or marketing consortium in recognition of a creative and innovative marketing campaign that resulted in increased visitation.

AWARD NOMINEES

DOWNTOWN WINNIPEG BIZ

Downtown Peggy was created in 2009 as the source for downtown news and events on Facebook and Twitter for Downtown Winnipeg BIZ. A year later, she started blogging and connected member businesses with Winnipeggers. In 2011, Downtown Peggy went from virtual to reality with the Spot Peggy Downtown contest and the Holiday Scavenger Hunt. Cut-out Peggys were placed in downtown businesses and location hints were dropped using social media. There were more than 1,500 contest entries for Spot Peggy Downtown. Downtown Peggy won an International Downtown Association award and has become a social media model for other North American BIZ associations.

FESTIVAL DU VOYAGEUR

The 2011 edition of the Festival de Voyageur received a near perfect guest satisfaction rate. Despite icy temperatures, Winnipeg's celebration of francophone culture was a resounding success. That's partially due to a memorable marketing campaign. With funding from the federal government's Marquee Tourism Events Program, the festival's marketing brain trust identified several key initiatives and then put a plan into action. The "Get/Soyez" campaign, with its instantly recognizable logo and voyageur character, delivered brilliant branding. Increased social media presence tapped into new audiences. And staff presence at trade shows and conferences helped guests in droves to the 2011 party.

WINNIPEG FOLK FESTIVAL

When nuisance mosquitos are the nemesis, the Winnipeg Folk Festival's creative team makes lemonade with lemons. A cartoon dragonfly starred in the 2011 "Outside Expectations" campaign. The character tapped into the myth that the organization releases dragonflies to hunt the bloodsuckers. Meanwhile, the playful positioning statement reinforced the notion that the outdoor festival gives guests more than they expect. The plan worked. Merchandise sold out two days before the festival's end, free transit on the Festival Express jumped 181 per cent from 2010, and attendance for the 2011 festival hit nearly 60,000, approximately 5,400 more than the previous year.

WINNIPEG TOURISM AWARD OF DISTINCTION

INNOVATION OF THE YEAR

SPONSORED BY



Presented to an individual, organization, business or marketing consortium in recognition of a new tourism product/service/process or approach that increased tourism to Winnipeg during 2011.

AWARD NOMINEES

ASSINIBOINE PARK CONSERVANCY

Assiniboine Park Conservancy had a very busy year. In 2011, the Nature Playground, a children's playground with rolling greens and large play structures, debuted to rave reviews from kids and their parents. The Qualico Family Centre and Park Café, the park's new restaurant and event venue also opened. The Duck Pond grew to twice its size, making it a perfect spot for winter ice skating and summer waterfowl watching. The new venues marked the completion of phase I of a \$200 million development plan for the park and zoo. If that weren't enough, outdoor Friday night movies screened throughout August at the Lyric, among other new programming.

CULTURE DAYS

Culture Days/ Fete de la Culture 2011 brought together English and French arts and cultural communities in a massive, province-and-Canada-wide celebration of the arts. At free, interactive and behind-the-scenes events held three days in September, artists and architects, curators and designers opened their doors to the public. In Manitoba, 30,000 people attended more than 250 events celebrating visual arts, heritage, theatre, dance and music, new media and spoken word. Culture Days 2011 saw a significant increase in public and group participation in Winnipeg and set the stage for the development of more cultural tourism packages.

THE FORKS

When famed architect Frank Gehry designs and installs a one-of-a-kind warming hut in Winnipeg especially for your competition, you must be doing something right. That's exactly what happened during the Warming Huts 2012: An Art + Architecture Competition on Ice. The competition, organized by The Forks and endorsed by the Manitoba Association of Architects, attracted submissions from around the world. The innovative huts, which were erected on the Assiniboine Credit Union River Trail, pushed the envelope of design. An estimated 200,000 people visited The Forks during January and February. International media picked up the story, enhancing the city's reputation as a centre for world-class architecture.

WINNIPEG TOURISM AWARD OF DISTINCTION

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

DESIGNATED BY
TOURISM WINNIPEG



Presented to an individual, organization or business that contributes to Winnipeg's tourism industry. The nominee is an advocate of tourism who demonstrates a strong commitment to the growth and success of Winnipeg's tourism industry.

GEORGE GERSHMAN

Before there was Linked In, Twitter and facebook connecting the tourism industry, there was George Gershman. His love of people and his keen interest in sharing information are at the heart of his personality. And with that, he has a special ability to connect with others in a way to create change.

After all, this is the man who coined the phrase, "Tourism is everybody's business."

Throughout his 60-year career, the 89-year-old, never retired, the Winnipeg tourism leader continues to spread the good word about the city. Along with his love of Winnipeg, George conveys that same devotion to his family, and is deeply involved with his children and grandchildren. He has been married to his wife, Gloria for 63 years.

George's journey into the hospitality industry began with his education in social work. His caring nature formed the backbone of his career. For 15 years, George was general manager of the Charterhouse Hotel. Long before the phrase culinary tourism was even talked about, George understood the value in it when running the hotel's restaurant the Rib Room—famous for its legendary ribs and rib sauce. His career also led him to manage Glendale Country Club for 20 years, where he's now an honorary life member.

With his twinkling blue eyes and friendly charm, George continues to push for change for tourism on the Provincial Taxi Board. His incredible list of contributions include serving on the board of Can-Man Tourism Agreement; Canada Customs; Tourism Winnipeg; Tourism Alliance for Western & Northern Canada; and Folklorama, where he was personally credited for advocating a two-week event in order to attract more tourists. He has won awards from Tourism Magazine, the Hall of Fame Tourism Promotion of Merit by Tourism Industry of Manitoba, a Tourism Ambassador Award from Travel Manitoba, and the prestigious City of Winnipeg Community Service Award in 2007. He was the founder and chairman behind "Be a Hometown Tourist" program, which encouraged locals to recognize what we have in this city. And he has served as president for the Tourism Association of Winnipeg and vice president for the Tourism Industry of Manitoba.

Today, George continues to connect with Winnipeggers as a motivational speaker to senior citizen groups and organizations advocating healthy living.



 tourism **winnipeg**.com