



# Golden Nuggets

## Innisfail Art Club -building community through art

WILMA WATSON FELT INSPIRED TO TRY AND BRING THE ENTIRE CENTRAL ALBERTA COMMUNITY TOGETHER BY BUILDING A MULTI-FACETED, SUMMER-LONG EVENT. AS PRESIDENT OF THE INNISFAIL ART CLUB, SHE FIGURED IT COULD ALL BE ACHIEVED THROUGH ART.



Seems she's right! So far, 52 artists in all mediums and throughout the region have registered to participate, but so have numerous businesses and community organizations. It will take a village to get the first Innisfail Art in Nature Walk off the ground, and the village is stepping up to the call!

"The Art Club is trying to partner with different sectors in the community to make this a full tourist attraction. We've set up an entire section on our [Innisfail Art Club website](#) to highlight fun things to do, places to eat and stay over, businesses to check out and special events to take part in," said Wilma, who has presented this opportunity to countless area businesses and community organizations.



"I think people are interested in being part of this because a lot of groups in this community are feeling disconnected from each other. When I grew up here, everyone helped one another and there was great community spirit. My husband, Brad, and I moved to Calgary 30 years ago for our careers, and when we returned to Innisfail nine years ago we noticed that somehow that had gone missing. But there are a lot of positive things going on here and we think many people want to ignite that spirit again."

Wilma and Brad were featured in one of the first Golden Nuggets stories on the Life in Retirement website (you can read the [story at this link](#)), when Little Free Libraries were being launched in Innisfail. That initiative involved installing five Little Libraries throughout the town. One, however, has been the target of some vandalism on more than one occasion. But each time something new takes hold at that Little Library. At first the organizing group expanded the free offerings at that site to include board games as well as books, to encourage people to spend more time together. Before long locals began to repair some of the damage, showing it has become important to the community.

"That's what community is about," said Wilma. "This community stepped up for years when my mom was sick while I was growing up, and I don't know how my dad and my three sisters and I would have coped without that support. It was while I was with my sisters in Banff last fall, actually, when we experienced their Art in Nature Walk and I thought 'We could do that in Innisfail!' I took the idea to the Art Club in December and here we are getting ready to launch it next month."

***The Innisfail Art in Nature Walk, with the theme Flora and Fauna, takes place around Napoleon Lake in Centennial Park from June 21 - September 27.***



Artist: Wendy Johnsen



Artist: Laura Ouimet

# ALL FORMS OF VISUAL ARTISTS, MUSICIANS, WRITERS... THE GROUP HOPES TO SHOWCASE EVERY ART FORM OVER THE SUMMER

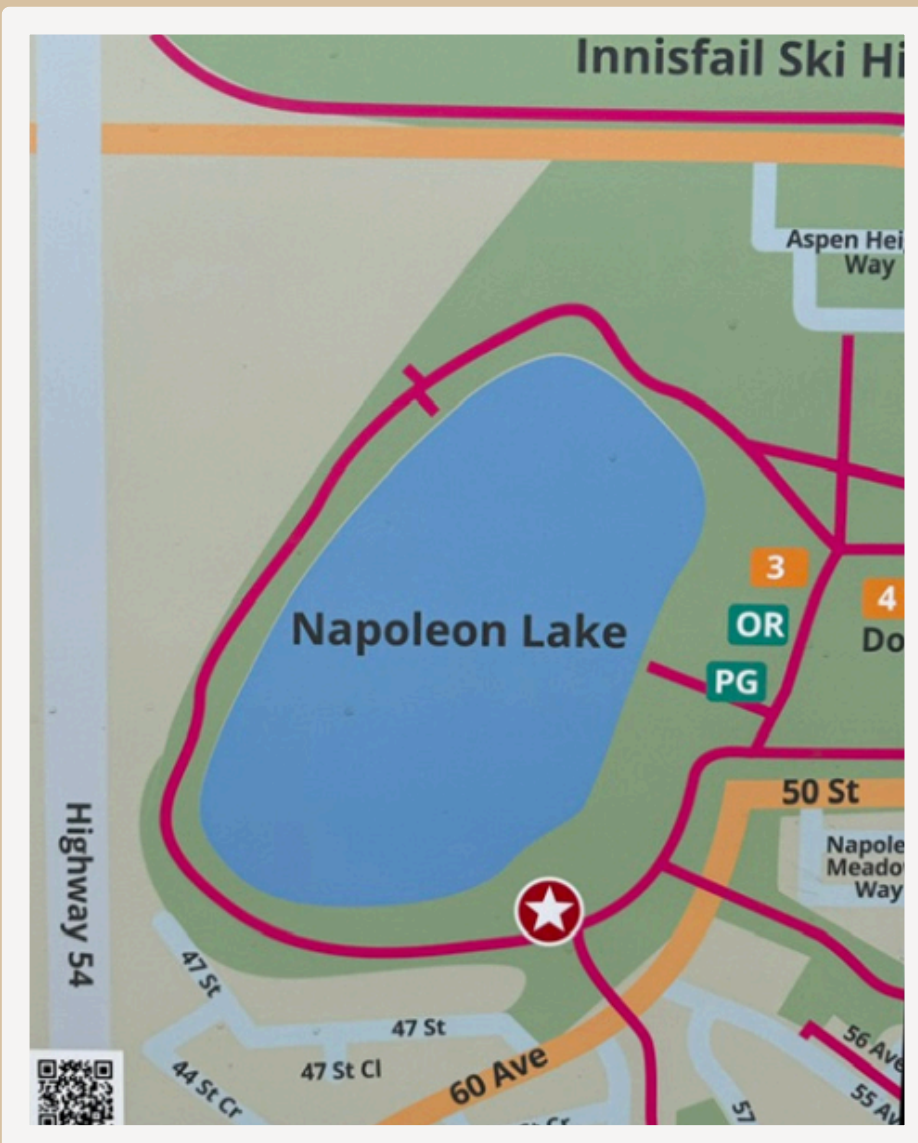


*Wilma will have to decide which pieces of her intricate beadwork she will have as part of the Innisfail Art in Nature Walk!*

Wilma has met with the organizer of the Banff event to gather ideas on how to make the Art Walk a success. She has presented to Innisfail Town Council, assuring them the installations will be very conscious of the environment. **The Innisfail Art in Nature Walk, with the theme Flora and Fauna, takes place around Napoleon Lake in Centennial Park from June 21 – September 27.** There are special events, including some specific for kids, tied to the Walk throughout the summer (more events will be added, so be sure to check back at the [Innisfail Art Club website](#)). A grand opening event takes place on Sunday, June 21, with a free barbecue and some local musicians. It will be a grand celebration of Indigenous Peoples Day, Father's Day and summer solstice, as well.

“We are showcasing all forms of art, including glass artists, painters, sculptures, woodworking, metal art, and more. Half of our Art Club is showing their work and we have more and more artists signing up. I'm always looking for more, right up to the day before we start! We have artists coming from throughout Alberta, with a primary focus here in Central Alberta. It's going to be fun. This whole endeavour has sparked my energy and I love it!”

All the artists will be recognized with plaques at the Art Walk and highlighted on the website.



If you are an artist looking for more information, contact Wilma at [WilmaWatson1981@gmail.com](mailto:WilmaWatson1981@gmail.com)

Otherwise, we will see you out on The Walk this summer! It's free, it's fascinating, it's outside in the park. What could be better on a summer's day?!



**Artist: Kathleen Polson**

If you know of someone or something that should be featured in Golden Nuggets, please contact me at [SandyBexon@gmail.com](mailto:SandyBexon@gmail.com)!

