



For Immediate Release

PROGRESSIVE VOLUNTEER SIGNUP SYSTEM READY FOR VOLUNTEER WEEK

Sooke, BC - April 13, 2018 - An innovative online sign-up system adopted by the Sooke Fine Arts Society allows people to self-manage their time and volunteer commitments. The Society is preparing for Volunteer Week (April 23-29) and the 32nd annual Sooke Fine Arts Show, which last year attracted a record 8,500 visitors from all over Vancouver Island and beyond.

On July 27, the Sooke Fine Arts Show will open its doors at Seaparc's arena for the 32nd year and invite art lovers of all ages to view a whole new collection of juried art. Visitors find it hard to believe that the high-end, modern gallery operates as an arena covered in ice much of the rest of the year. The transformation of the gallery, and the show itself could not be achieved without the effort of teams of volunteers. "It is remarkable and truly amazing how well-oiled the "machine" has become after three decades incorporating consistent improvements," said Christa Brenan, Executive Director. "Having grown to include 375 artworks from all of Vancouver Island, it now involves 20 teams managing over 300 volunteers."

Coming from humble and proud beginnings in 1986, with a committee of five dedicated artists working out of the back of the Sooke Region Museum, the show has grown exponentially. An online volunteer sign-up system, online submissions and electronic jurying are all part of the process improvements over the years. The Show is now an 11-day multi-faceted event incorporating live music, art demos, lectures and activities for children, youth and seniors, a large gift shop, and a professional level Youth Art Gallery. Each area involves different skillsets and attracts volunteers eager to share their experience and learn from others.

"The Sooke Fine Arts Show is built upon a tour de force in volunteer effort, epitomizing what community is all about," said Brenan. "Volunteering for the Sooke Fine Arts Show is something many locals look forward to from year to year, as it offers a chance to be part of a proud community event that amazes and delights visitors. It is a great energy to be part of."

Whether you are a seasoned volunteer or a curious newcomer, there are a wide range of jobs and shifts to choose from. "Our volunteers are an integral part of the event - without their help, we wouldn't have a show!" says Volunteer Coordinator, Gail Young, who is happy to take calls or help people with the system which allows shift-changes, provides reminders and creates a convenient way for people to get involved. "I have made lifelong friends through the Sooke Fine Arts Show and would encourage anyone who has some free time this summer to come out and see what it's all about."

It has been said that Sooke is the Volunteer Capital of Canada – considering the volunteer effort behind such large events as the Sooke Fine Arts Show, this is easy to believe.

More information at sookefinearts.com.

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