

# LEADER-POST

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## Celebrating cultural diversity

Multiculturalism

By Pamela Roth, The Leader-Post April 21, 2010



**The Grade 7-8 Lakeview Lions Drum Band performed at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum on Tuesday during a news conference relating to Culture Days in Saskatchewan, which is to run Sept. 24-26 in hopes of enhancing Canadians' awareness of cultural events in their communities.**

**Photograph by: Bryan Schlosser, Leader-Post, The Leader-Post**

When Sidney Kaye is invited to an event to say a prayer in his native language and share a piece of his Cree culture, he never says no.

"It means a lot to me to show the people how we lived years ago and what we had then," said Kaye, an elder of the Kawacatoose First Nation.

"It's important to keep our culture alive across Canada. A lot of people have lost their language and their ways of ceremony. It's pretty sad for the young ones because a lot of them would like to know how to get started and they can't."

Kaye isn't the only one who recognizes the importance of preserving and celebrating his culture, not only in Saskatchewan, but nation wide.

This September, communities throughout the country will be showcasing their culture through Culture Days -- a Canada-wide initiative that aims to raise awareness and promote the value of arts, culture and heritage.

According to Rose Gilks, chairwoman of Culture Days in Saskatchewan and general manager of SaskCulture, Saskatchewan has a vibrant and diverse culture that is sometimes taken for granted.

In Regina, Gilks said, culture is alive and thriving, which is evident from the abundance and variety of activities that take place here.

From a night at the symphony or a play at Globe Theatre, to a live performance at a pub or the opening of an art exhibit, residents of Regina -- and Saskatchewan -- have a lot to be proud of when it comes to cultural diversity, Gilks said.

Showcasing various cultures also creates a healthy community, she added, and can break down racial barriers.

"We have a very rich diversity of cultures. It's important to learn about one another, because I think we can appreciate and value each other so much more," said Gilks, who was at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum on Tuesday to announce the province's participation in Culture Days.

"It's how we tell our stories, how we learn about our sense of self, who we are and where we come from. For people who come to this country, it allows them to keep the part of what they brought with them and share it with the rest of us."

Culture Days is to take place across Saskatchewan Sept. 24-26, and will showcase all areas of culture as well as heritage, multicultural, ethno-cultural, First Nations and Metis traditions.

The provincial government has also proclaimed Sept. 20-26 as Culture Week.

During Culture Days, participating cultural groups will have a chance to provide opportunities for the public to learn more about their particular cultural activity, which can be as simple as a brief open house, or a public performance.

The idea for the event was conceived in response to the growing recognition that a vibrant arts and culture sector contributes to a healthy and stable society.

The nation-wide celebration represents the largest-ever collective public participation campaign undertaken by the arts and cultural community in Canada.

Any cultural group, individual artist or cultural worker who wants to participate in Culture Days can register their event online at [www.culturedays.ca](http://www.culturedays.ca).

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<http://www.leaderpost.com/life/Culture+Days+activities+take+place+Saskatchewan/2931024/story.html>