

A community Round Dance
ended the first night of
Holiday Alley 2018 in Selkirk.
PHOTO: Liz Tran



2018

FINAL REPORT

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Life inspires art on Holiday Alley. *PAINTING: Gayle Halliwell*



About 5,000 people help launch the second year of Holiday Alley. *PHOTO: Liz Tran*



The Indigenous-led Round Dance gets help from Roger Greene. *PHOTO: Liz Tran*



Visitors like Vanessa Figus took in almost 30 different activities. *PHOTO: Chris McIvor*

About Holiday Alley

November 30 – December 1, 2018
Selkirk, Manitoba

Holiday Alley is a volunteer-run winter festival bringing **art, light, sound and creativity** to Selkirk, Manitoba. The 2018 festival expanded on the inaugural 2017 festival. The second annual event featured more light, more art and more opportunity for the community to shine.

This project was able to grow this year through funding from and partnerships with foundations, tourism agencies, non-profit organizations, local businesses and two levels of government. They all saw Holiday Alley as an opportunity to reinvest in downtown Selkirk and the region.

Over two days Holiday Alley welcomed an estimated 5,000 people to Selkirk's old downtown. The peak of attendance was during the lighting of the buildings on Friday night, November 30 where community members and visitors packed Manitoba Ave. East to see 39 buildings lit with over 125,000 LED bulbs.

The owners of the buildings on Manitoba Ave. East and Eveline Street lit up their facades with a whole lot of help from grants, volunteers and the City of Selkirk's leadership and staff.

In 2018 there was more entertainment, new interactive art, a spoken word showcase, an outdoor high tea and a pooch parade.

As we prepare for Holiday Alley 2019 we'd love to hear your ideas on how we can do more to build community through art, light, sound and creativity in our region. Your ideas, funding or volunteer hours will make next year even more amazing.

Join our email list by sending your contact details to info@holidayalley.ca

Holiday Alley by the numbers

2017

2018

ART

Artists' work for sale	100	200
Art on Ice shacks auctioned	6	2
Sculptures auctioned	0	2
Highest art bid	\$1,225	\$3,300

LIGHT

LED bulbs installed	75,000	125,000
Strings of lights	3,000	5,000
Buildings lit	24	39
City blocks lit	1	5

SOUND

Groups of performers	25	30
Performances	75	77
Indoor and outdoor venues	7	10

CREATIVITY

Dark alleyways decorated	3	3
Interactive art Installations	0	4
Art demonstrations	1	4
Pooch Parade contestants	n/a	40

FAMILY PORTRAITS

Santa Clauses	2 (don't tell the kids!)	2
Giant selfies	395	346
Green screen photos	244	330

FOODIE FUNCTIONS

Chili/Soup cook-off competitors	15	17
Chili/Soup tickets sold	170	206
High tea tickets sold	n/a	35
Beer/Scotch/Vodka tasters	170	160

DOWNTOWN TRAFFIC

Attendees (estimate)	3-4,000	4-5,000
Record Sales	Roxi's Uptown Cafe The Gypsy Traders Riverside Grill	The Mighty Kiwi The Gypsy Traders Community Threads
Three times regular sales	Twice Over	50% increase
Two times regular sales	35% increase	
Garry Theatre attendance		



Simpson's Folly performs at The Mighty Kiwi.
PHOTO: Liz Tran



A family poses in snowman alley.
PHOTO: Liz Tran



Photos with Santa were projected onto the Garry Theatre. PHOTO: Liz Tran



PHOTO: Chris McIvor

Holiday Alley by the numbers continued...

2017 2018

BUSINESS SURVEY SAYS*

Sales during Holiday Alley were...

Much more	n/a	27%
More	n/a	37%
Same	n/a	27%
Less	n/a	9%
Greatest Sales increase reported	n/a	300%
Greatest foot traffic increase reported	n/a	500%

*11 Downtown businesses responded

FINANCIAL PARTNERS

Building owners invested in lights	22	36
Private business sponsors/donors	16	16
Non-profits/unions sponsors/donors	5	4
Government/Agencies	8	5
Volunteers & City of Selkirk Staff	100+	150+

TELLING OUR STORY

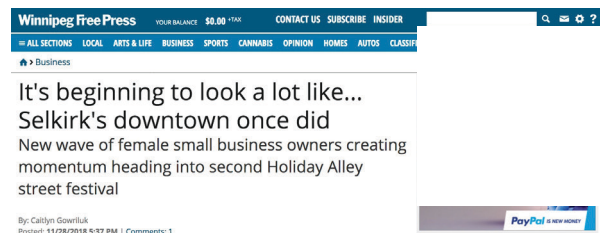
TV news stories & hits	14	9
Newspaper stories	10	23
Online news stories	7	7
Magazine stories	6	1
Radio stories	3	3
Top event lists	2	4

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook page likes/ follows	433	679
Instagram followers	348	745
Followers from outside RRN region	n/a	46%



CBC's John Sauder did five live hits on Holiday Alley and joined Mayor Larry Johannson on stage for the lighting of the street. PHOTO: Liz Tran



CHRIS MCIVOR PHOTO
Some members of Selkirk's female-dominated downtown small business scene that are focusing on this year's Holiday Alley, a two-day winter festival of arts, crafts, music and food

A Winnipeg Free Press article highlighted the work of the business owners in Selkirk's downtown.

Art, Light, Sound & Creativity

New in 2018!

Spoken Word Showcase

Holiday Alley worked with the Lord Selkirk School Division to get funding for a poet-in-residence for the fall of 2018. Students from East Selkirk Middle School and Lord Selkirk Regional Comprehensive School and the performance poetry instructor Steve Locke then hosted Holiday Alley's first Spoken Word Showcase.



A student performs at the spoken word showcase.
PHOTO: Wendy Buelow



Chainsaw carvers worked for over five hours to create art from logs.
PHOTO: Liz Tran

Chainsaw Carvers

Six chainsaw carvers started with logs of wood and turned them into finished pieces of art by the end of the day Saturday. Some of these carvers donated pieces to be auctioned off at the art auction Saturday evening.

Barn Quilt Trail and Activities

Volunteers set up the world's smallest barn quilt trail and gave children of all ages the opportunity to create their own barn quilt squares using crayons, pencils, paint and their own creativity. Over 500 people visited the mini barn quilt trail and over half of those people created their own work of art.



Volunteer artists helped kids create their own barn quilt squares.
PHOTO: Liz Tran



The outdoor high tea was hosted in a tent on Holiday Alley.
PHOTO: Holiday Alley

High Tea

The first outdoor winter high tea in Red River North welcomed guests to sit and enjoy savoury and sweet treats from local restaurants and two custom teas created in Selkirk.

Pooch Parade

Forty well-dressed dogs participated in the first Holiday Alley Pooch Parade. Some came decked out in lights and others came wearing their onesies as they paraded down Manitoba Ave. East.



One of the first place winners at the first Holiday Alley Pooch Parade.
PHOTO: Liz Tran



ImPACT, an installation of mini trampolines, challenges people to take a moment and think about how they interact with art in everyday life. PHOTO: Liz Tran

Art Installations

Visitors to Holiday Alley had the opportunity to interact with four different temporary art installations on the street this year. Three of the four installations came from artists outside of the Red River North area and were also showcased at Nuit Blanche in Winnipeg in September 2018.

Holiday Alley | Selkirk, Manitoba
Manitoba Ave. East | From Main St. to Eveline St.



PARTY ANIMALS

Selkirk businesses light up
the old downtown

BY KIT MUIR

Selkirk's award-winning tourism event Holiday Alley completed its second year in early December, having already confirmed what everyone had hoped: tourism is more than a great party. It's an economic spark.

The two-day winter festival could be a case study for how to reimagine an old prairie downtown and how to support your municipality's downtown renewal plan.

The dream to use tourism to bring more people and more spending back to Selkirk's historic core has been successful largely because several small businesses – most of them led or owned by Selkirk Biz members – stepped up early to make it happen.

"There's definitely a correlation between a business owner who engages with their local Chamber and one who embraces a new crazy tourism idea like turning a very wide and old street into a sparkling, energetic celebration of art, light, sound and creativity for the first really cold weekend in December," says Holiday Alley co-creator Shirley Muir.

In its inaugural year in 2017, Holiday Alley united small businesses, from the owners of a 1950s diner at one end of the old downtown to a well-established women's clothing store that anchors Selkirk's busiest intersection.

After a year of planning and many hours of volunteering, they managed to draw 3,000 to 4,000 people a day and ring up record sales. The Gwen Fox Gallery gift shop was the biggest winner with a 1,000 per cent increase in sales. The Gryps' Treasures, a home decor store that had just moved into the old downtown, saw a 300 per cent increase in sales. Even the Garry Theatre saw a 35 per cent spike in attendance.

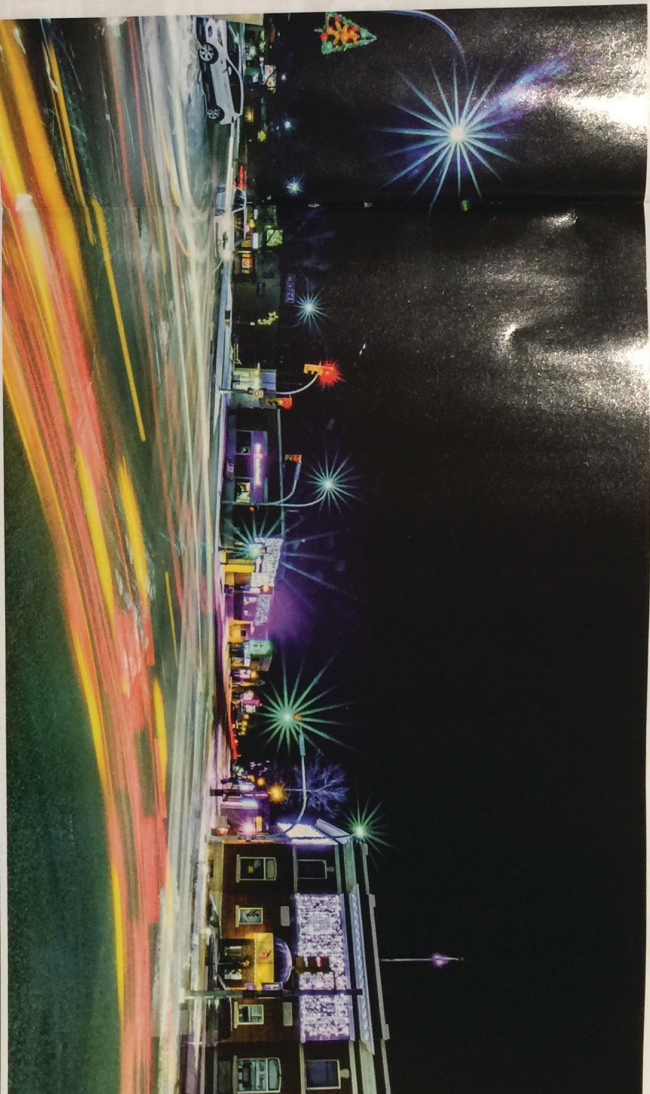
Inclusion Selkirk, which supports adults with disabilities and runs the Riverside Grill, a restaurant that doubles as a training ground for the people they support, sold three times their usual number of burgers, fries and milkshakes during Holiday Alley's first year. And they have seen increased traffic ever since.

"We saw people coming downtown and experiencing it all over again because they had forgotten how good we are down here," says Maria Freeman, CEO of Inclusion Selkirk, which was the recipient of the 2017 Partnership Award from the Interlake Tourism Association.

"We bought this location a few years ago because it's an established place, but we know the more local people who invest in this downtown, the more people we bring to it," says Freeman.

At the opposite end of the block is Packers

CONTINUED >>



Clockwise from top: With 5,000 strings of light, Holiday Alley lit up the downtown in 2017 (photo by Jeff Archibald); local artist Majid Kermani created a 10-foot elk out of cedar/elm found on the banks of the Red River and sold it during the art auction (photo by Chris McIvor); Selkirk Biz members Jocelyn Kraml (left) and Miranda Schmidt (right), of the Mighty Kew, with Keat Bohemer (centre), of Keat's Cafe on the Red (photo by Joy Barman).



<< CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS

Women's Fashion, where owner Kaly Lewis remembers the days when the old downtown was the centre of all commerce. "Back in the '70s when we first bought this business, Manitoba Avenue between Main and Eveline streets was vibrant. There were three dress shops, small department stores, two jewelry stores, and that's where everyone in town did their shopping," Lewis says.

But as independent shop owners retired in the '80s, it became one empty building after another. More recent big-box development on the west side of town continued to fuel the decline.

"But downtown is a unique part of our city and we need to embrace it," says Lewis, a former Selkirk BIZ chair.

Roxi and Linda Bohemer of Roxi's by

the Red Uptown Café and On the Rocks Bar, agree. They moved from a successful restaurant and hotel business in southern Manitoba to breathe new life into a slowly reputation for an eclectic menu at a great price and incredibly friendly staff.

"There are a lot of visionaries in this city and I want to be part of that," says Roxi Bohemer, who hosted beer, stretch and vodka tasting and hosted several chili and soup cook-off stations during Holiday Alley.

"This is all about bringing people together and bringing tourists from outside of the community to see how amazing this city is," she says. "I love this downtown, and it's only going to get better and better."

Her newest neighbours are also the youngest entrepreneurs on the block. They

hit a 260 per cent increase in sales in the first Holiday Alley weekend.

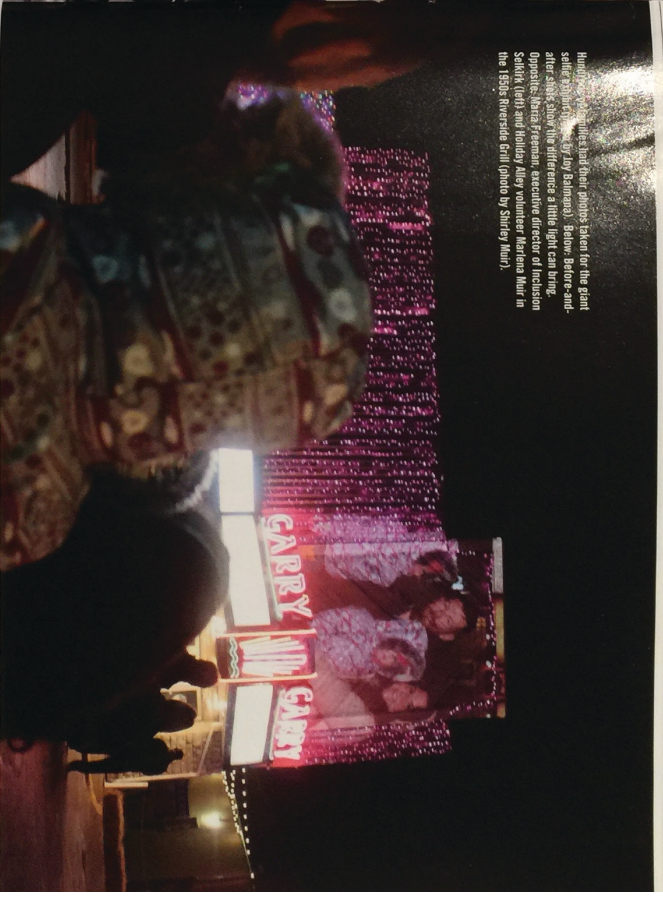
In their early 20s, Miranda Schmitt and Jocelyn Kreml moved into the main floor of Selkirk's historic Trader Bank building, opened The Mighty Kiwi Juice Bar & Eatery and became Selkirk BIZ members because they saw a future in the old downtown.

"The reason that we chose to build our business on Manitoba Avenue is because the City of Selkirk's plans to revitalize the downtown," says Kreml, who was on the Holiday Alley planning committee from Day 1.

Holiday Alley is designed to dovetail strategically with the City of Selkirk's own vision for downtown renewal.

"It's really a demonstration sport for what's possible for our downtown," says

Holiday Alley members took their photos taken for the grant selling products. (Photo by Jay Schmitt). Below: Before-and-after side-by-side showing the difference a little light can bring. Opposite: Janna Freeman, executive director of Inclusion Saskatchewan and Holiday Alley volunteer Marisa Muir in the 1930s Riverside Grill (photo by Shirley Muir).



Muir, president of The PTHouse, which developed the brand of Holiday Alley to strategically mirror Travel Manitoba's.

"We recognize that Travel Manitoba is doing an incredible job of growing tourism for all of us. The 06-4 plan the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce has negotiated to circulate four per cent of tourism tax revenue back into tourism marketing is very helpful," she says.

When Muir first conceived Holiday Alley in 2016, she made a point of putting a small line at the top of all her to-do lists. It quotes Danish architect and urban designer Jan Gehl, who was guest speaker at the Winnipeg Chamber's Livable Cities Conference in September 2018.

"A good city is like a good party — people stay longer than really necessary, because they are enjoying themselves."



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