

PRESS RELEASE

BruceGreySimcoe Announces Four Seasons of Fun Winners

May 14, 2012: BruceGreySimcoe is pleased to announce the grand prize winners of the Four Seasons of Fun Contest. The online challenge kicked off the Spring tourist season and invited creative entries showcasing the unique character of Bruce, Grey and Simcoe counties.

The contest launched on March 26, 2012 with the goal to share favourite destinations and experiences of residents and visitors to the region. During the four-week run, nearly 1,400 photographs, stories, poems and videos were received. There were over a hundred weekly random prizes awarded including Nikon COOLPIX S2600 cameras valued at \$130 each. Nikon Canada was the lead sponsor of the contest prizes.

The grand prize winners were chosen by a panel of judges known for their creativity including partner agencies Brandworks International Inc. and 78digital as well as contest co-sponsors Regional Tourism Organization 7 (RTO7).

"We are overwhelmed with the beauty and passion inspired by the region," said Jeffrey Schmidt, Executive Director RTO7. *"The number of entrants and the quality of the submissions far exceeded our expectations."*

Five grand prize winners of Nikon J1 cameras with Two Lens Wide Angle Kits valued at over \$780 each were awarded to the top two entries in each of the three categories: photographs, videos and stories. The grand prize winners are:

- Mark Hirsch: Story Category
- Orval Thompson: Video Category
- Sarah Kicks: Photography Category
- Scott Collens: Stakeholder Photography Category
- James Hoey: Stakeholder Video Category

There were 15 second prize winners of Nikon AW100 cameras valued at \$350 each. The winners will be showcased on the www.brucegreysimcoe.com website and may be featured in marketing media campaigns to promote the region's attractions.

In addition to the juried winners, the online community rated their favourites. The high voting activity brought to the forefront several entries that did not make it to the final voting stage. In appreciation and in response to the level of participation, a new category for prizes, Voter Appreciation, was created by contest sponsors. The winners are: Sean Weir, Lucia Tarascio and Farihah Shah.

Entries covered a wide range of subjects reflective of the region's diversity including images of lakes, mountains, streams, forests, gardens, rock jumping, ice fishing, paddling, sleigh rides, sailing, tobogganing, golf, spelunking, kite-skiing, horseback riding, barn-raising, winery harvests, pow-wows, polar bear swims, local fairs, world cups, scarecrow invasions, air-shows, and rodeos.

BruceGreySimcoe is looking forward to kicking off their summer tourism campaign and was thrilled with the creation of a community that has so passionately shared their experiences. Look for the launch of the new BruceGreySimcoe.com website in June 2012.

About BruceGreySimcoe

BruceGreySimcoe is the regional tourism brand recently launched by Regional Tourism Organization 7 to promote and market Bruce, Grey, and Simcoe counties as a four-season tourist destination. RTO7 is a not-for-profit organization created in 2010 and funded by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport as a result of the province's regional tourism management and funding strategy. The organization's mandate is to build and support competitive and sustainable tourism in the region.

Region 7 Tourism Quick Facts

- Each year the three counties that comprise Region 7 attract over 9 million visitors
- In 2008 alone these visitors spent an estimated \$1.1 billion on everything from food to accommodation to transportation
- Tourism across the region accounts for some 27,000 full-time jobs that derive billions more in economic outputs
- Region 7 has in excess of 25,000 accommodation rooms, including hotels, motels, camping and RV sites, commercial resorts, cabins and B&B accommodations
- There are over 400 attractions across the region
- Region 7 offers over 600 festival and event days each year

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For more information or to view the gallery of entries, visit www.brucegreysimcoe.com or follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/#!/BruceGreySimcoe> or Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/BruceGreySimcoe>.

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