

2016 John Arcand Fiddle Fest Report

The 19th Annual John Arcand Fiddle Fest ran like a well-oiled machine with the amazing staff, instructors, performers, partners, and coordinators! This year covered a whole range of new programming, new locations for some regular programming, record workshop numbers, and of course some challenges.

With cooler temperatures and “on again off again showers” we didn’t see as many early birds arrive in the campground this year, but Thursday morning the sun was shining and they came rolling in! We surpassed last year’s attendance even considering some showers “at inconvenient times” hampered our day pass sales both Saturday and Sunday. And with over 3000 in total attendance, we were also very pleased to see so many “first time festers” filled with excitement and delight at all they had experienced – and we know we have a big job ahead of us in planning for continued growth in programming, audience, and our 20th Anniversary, and we look forward to working hard to make it unforgettable.

The free shuttle service we provide from four Saskatoon locations showed a measurable increase in use this year, and this “green” initiative is allowing many folks without accessibility to attend and the convenience of the schedule is also much appreciated by the senior crowd.

With our one-time gate fee and 12 and under admitted free, affordable wristband prices for day or weekend, free shuttle service and a weekend of unique family fun, locals as well as those from across Canada and beyond are learning increasingly to favour the Fiddle Fest as an inexpensive and accessible summer destination.

Workshops

This year, we added even more to our FREE workshop roster, bringing the grand total to 110 and increasing attendance to a record number of 1562 participants. We were also pleased to welcome the Gabriel Dumont Institute back. Their assistance in programming in the Cultural Camp and their display and sale of Metis product was very well received. The musical interactive workshops featured daily in the Children’s Area were another great addition that was loved by “kids of all ages”.

Fiddle Contest

Participation in the fiddle contest had 45 fiddlers vying to take home over \$8600.00 in prize money. The winners hailed mainly from the Prairie Provinces but also with notable participation from BC and Ontario.

2016 Competition Winners:

<http://www.johnarcandfiddlefest.com/pdf/Competition%20Winners%20List%202016.pdf>