

[<<Back](#)



Butte draws 120,000 for National Folk Festival

Posted: July 13, 2009 07:24 PM

Updated: July 16, 2009 04:18 PM



The official numbers have been tallied from this year's National Folk Festival.

An estimated 120,000 people attended the three-day event, which was held July 10, 11 and 12 in Butte, according to National Folk Festival Executive Committee member George Everett. That breaks down to about 40,000 visitors per day.

The goal for next year is 150,000 festival goers, Everett said. The National Folk Festival will return for its third and final year in Butte in 2010.



Last year, an estimated 75,000 people attended the festival.

Fundraising numbers were also up from last year. The bucket brigade, volunteers toting donation buckets through the crowd, collected \$43,600 from visitors this year. That's up from last year by more than \$8,000.

The 71st annual National Folk Festival returned to the Mining City for its sophomore year. It will return for a third year next year before shipping off to another U.S. city.



Even rain didn't keep festival goers away for the free three-day festival.

"Well we were a little concerned on Sunday with the rain, but the sun came back out and people came back out," Everett said in an earlier interview.

Earlier this week, festival organizers announced the theme for next year's festival. The theme for the festival's third and final year in Butte will focus on mining, a fitting theme for the Mining City.



"And we will focus on mining heritage and mining cultures, something people in Butte know a little about, and we'll be able to showcase old time equipment, showcase a lot of demonstrators that have knowledge of technology that was used underground as well as the most recent mining," George Everett said.

Everett says the theme will also encompass the railroad history of the region.



Reporting from KXLF in Butte

(From July 14, 2009)

The National Folk Festival just wrapped up its second year in Butte and festival organizers have already announced the theme for next year's festival in the Mining City.

The theme for the festival's third and final year in Butte will focus on mining, a fitting theme for the Mining City.

"And we will focus on mining heritage and mining cultures, something people in Butte know a little about, and we'll be able to showcase old time equipment, showcase a lot of demonstrators that have knowledge of technology that was used underground as well as the most recent mining," National Folk Festival Executive Committee member George Everett said.

Everett says the theme will also encompass the railroad history of the region.

The National Folk Festival lured thousands to the Mining City over the weekend for its sophomore appearance.

An estimated 110,000 to 125,000 people attended the festival over the weekend, according to festival organizers. That's a significant increase from last year's estimated crowd of 75,000.

The 71st annual National Folk Festival was held Friday, Saturday and Sunday in Butte. It was the festival's second year in the Mining City. It will return for a third year next year before shipping off to another U.S. city.

(From July 13, 2009)

Judging from the numbers, the National Folk Festival's sophomore year in Butte was a success.

An estimated 110,000 to 125,000 people attended the festival over the weekend, according to festival organizers. That's a significant increase from last year's estimated crowd of 75,000.

The 71st annual National Folk Festival was held Friday, Saturday and Sunday in Butte. It was the festival's second year in the Mining City. It will return for a third year next year before shipping off to another U.S. city.

Even rain didn't keep festival goers away for the free three-day festival.

"Well we were a little concerned on Sunday with the rain, but the sun came back out and people came back out. (There is a) little bit of disagreement, 110,000 people, Butte Silver Bow says 125,000. We're going to try to nail it down over the next couple of days," National Folk Festival Executive Committee member George Everett said.

Everett says he hopes to have an official count by Thursday. The count will be based on grids from aerial photographs of the crowds.

Festival organizers are also looking for some input from those who attended this year's festival.

Many of the festival organizers met for breakfast in Butte Monday morning. They said the three-day event was a big success, but admit there is still room for improvement. So they're asking for suggestions and promising action.

"We did last year and as a result we made many changes to the festival to increase the number of golf carts for transport. We paved the Original (Stage), because there was trouble with wheelchairs and strollers, and we're going to do that again this year. We'll try to improve it and work on the suggestions and comments that we get from the public. They're coming in even this morning. We're getting emails and calls from people," Everett said.

There are some reports that, due to the huge turnout, some people had to wait three hours or more to catch a shuttle bus. As a result there is already discussion to increase the number of buses, to create extra parking areas and to expand the buffer zone around the perimeter of the festival area.

Another problem was no-shows for festival volunteers. While more than 900 said they would help out, 25 to 30

percent never reported.

Putting on a festival of this size costs money. Prior to the festival, the fundraising goal was at about \$80,000.

During the festival, the bucket brigade was busy collecting contributions, however there is no official tally yet on how much money was raised.

Organizers hope to have a number by Wednesday.

Also, during Monday's debriefing, it was mentioned that more volunteers are needed for the bucket brigade.

Along with the fabulous music showcased this year, there was also plenty of delicious food.

Last year, several vendors ran out of supplies and had to close down. This year, with thousands more attending the festival, workers put in long hours to meet the demand.

Many returning vendors say were prepared this year.

"There is so much more people this year than last. We sold out last year on Saturday. We brought twice as much product, but we still ended up selling out on Sunday. A lot more people this year than last," said Kainoa Lake of Island Noodles in Bigfork.

"You know, it was a lot busier this year, seems like three times as many people. Yesterday, the weather was hot. We were making them as fast as we could. Today, a little rainy, but we still did fine," said Silver Bow Montessori Director Don Kronenberger about the Bubble Tea stand.



All content © Copyright 2004 - 2009, WorldNow, Montana's News Station and Cordillera Communications. All Rights Reserved. For more information on this site, please read our [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#).