

THE 9TH ANNUAL JOHN ARCAND FIDDLE FEST WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!

The 9th annual John Arcand Fiddle Fest continued its path of exponential growth and success with an almost overwhelming response to an extra day of workshops and entertainment programming.

The weather was downright wonky with a mixture of torrential downpours, raging winds, and beautiful sunshine, but Mother Nature's moodiness didn't seem to deter festival goers in any way, shape or form.

With a variety of concerts and dances packing the house, and a fiddles & flapjacks breakfast bright and early on Sunday that drew a record 187 people, the 9th Annual John Arcand Fiddle Fest is a complete and total success. "Our attendance went from 2170 over three days in 2005 to 3730 over four days in 2006. That's about 72% more people! "There were times when we wondered where we would put everyone and how we could possibly look after their needs, but they are a great bunch of people and everyone took the challenges resulting from our growth in stride. They support us every way that they can, including being patient in line ups for food and washrooms or cuddling their chairs closer to their neighbors to make room for more people. We will start the job of preparing for an even larger festival in 2007 immediately, which will also mark our 10th anniversary. We have an interesting road ahead as we find the ways to grow our resources to meet this incredible demand."

Participation in Thursday's roster of fiddle workshops and an evening concert – both new offerings this year – was phenomenal, with 293 registrations for workshops and an audience of over 500 for the evening concert. Saturday's workshop numbers exploded with 590 registrations in fiddle, Red River Jigging, guitar, and piano. Of the 883 registrations for workshops this year, 307 were by youth 12 and under. To put that growth in perspective, in the year 2005, we had 252 workshop registrations and in 2004, there were 108.

Saturday and Sunday featured competitions with 54 fiddlers (a Fiddle Fest Record !) competing in the sanctioned fiddle contest and 30 Jiggers taking part in the Canadian Red River Jigging Championships.