

## Shigawake Agricultural Fair and Music Festival attract large crowds

Gilles Gagné & Marjorie Lepage

SHIGAWAKE – The Shigawake Agricultural Fair and Music Festival have been very special events for local people - the fair has been an attraction for 105 years and the music festival for six years. The 2014 version proved that it is a big drawing card for local people and tourists alike.

The mix of activities, a place where local people can display their best, such as baking, handicrafts, flowers and vegetables for a chance to win a prize, show their animals' prowess or a stage where spectators can enjoy a variety of bands presenting a wide array of musical genres, proved once again to be a successful recipe.

The horse haul remained the most popular event on the fair side. This year, the weight hauled went up to 9,000 pounds!

Many people observed that the number of children attending was greater than in previous years. They enjoyed the inflatable games installed on site.

The uncertain weather, from rainstorms to fine sunny



Photo: G. Gagné

Patrick Watson was the main drawing card of a very busy Saturday night, the busiest in six years of Shigawake Music Festival history.

periods, made it a little tricky for the organizers of the agricultural events. Saturday evening was the busiest ever for the music festival. Plants and Animals, Patrick Watson and the Clemville Kids made it a night to remember.

The event's artistic director, Meghan Clinton, was satisfied, although a bit tired, at the conclusion of the fair and festival, Sunday night.

"It was smooth. We always say that we can't grow as a festival because we can't facilitate it (growth) but this year, more people came. The fact that so many people came and we had to deal with that, and we did, is great. We talked to our directors and they said "no problem." So it went well," she explained.

Most numbers remained to be calculated when SPEC

talked to Ms. Clinton. She believes that probably close to 4,000 people came to the fairgrounds over the four days.

She is also confident that the expenses of close to \$50,000 will be covered by the revenues. "There will be a fair and a festival in 2015," she summarizes.

The fair-festival combination attracted a good number of newcomers. Saint-Elzéar's Jean-Marc Major was one of them.

"Friends of mine talked to me about the music festival last year so I came this year. I discovered possibly the highest concentration of musical talent per square inch that you can find anywhere! The fair is also fun. There is something for everyone here," said Mr. Major.

It was far from the first such event for New Carlisle Guy Gallibois. He put it this way. "In the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, members of the Anglophone community attended events organized by Francophones. Now, the Francophones are discovering our events."



Photo: Marjorie Lepage

The horse haul was again the focus of the Sunday afternoon crowd.

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