

2019 AGM of the RVBIA

Roncesvalles Polish Festival Committee Report

Submitted by Andrew Chomentowski, Chairman



Weather Impact

On Saturday, the weather was perfect. Some estimate that the attendance exceeded our record numbers from previous years. The beer gardens did well. Lineup were observed at many locations.

The BIA runs a beverage garden, a second garden is run by the Knights of Columbus Council associated with St Casimir's Church. All of their proceeds go to Charities which include Copernicus Lodge and St Joseph's Hospital.

On Sunday it rained yet to everyone's surprise there were still quite a few people on the street, umbrellas in hand. When the rain stopped, Roncesvalles was bustling. Many of the photos of crowds in the Power Point were taken on Sunday.

Celebrate Ontario Grant for Extended Programming

Our theme this year was A Celebration of Polish Culture and Cuisine. Thanks to Freda we received an Ontario Tourism grant of \$45,465 to promote this theme and some other initiative. This is a matching grant. We received the news very late. I want to thank the committee and Veronica for helping us navigate through the process.

Culinary Program

The Culinary Program worked well for social media: Our Culinary Ambassador, Ada Mlostek has 9,500 followers, so Roncesvalles was promoted to her network as well. The 5 restaurants interviewed on video for social media generated great content for the festival. Thanks for your efforts Daniele. David Neinstein, who coordinated the program said that there are a number of restaurants that want to be involved in the program next year. He proposes to find a food sponsor (such as Sobeys) to replace the money we would lose from food vendor fees, if we were to cut down on the number of food vendors.

A prix fix menu was offered by several of our eateries for a few days prior to the Festival. Some added a Polish accent to their usual menu items. The pierogi at Cinco had a spicy Mexican flavour. They were really tasty.

The Pierogi making class at Copernicus Lodge sold out quickly. Resident grandmothers shared their secrets while the Lodge's kitchen staff supervised.

Polka Party

A Tourism Grant funded the Friday night Polka Party which was well attended. Adam, Guardian Pharmacy sponsored the dance. Thanks Adam.

Gateway Sign

The RONCY sign at Howard Park was a social media hit. The Board is considering purchasing another one, perhaps with the help of another grant. The signs will be used at future Roncesvalles event.

Budget Reporting

The Festival team still has a lot of accounting and reporting to do to figure out exactly where we stand.

Here's what we know.

Revenue

In addition to the \$45,465 Ontario Tourism Grant, we received \$1200 from Veteran's Affairs for the military stage at Copernicus Lodge. We also received \$3200 from the Polish Consulate in Toronto.

Sponsorship sales exceeded the target. Approximately \$92K was raised.

Vendor sales were up by about 21% from last year to approximately \$77.5K.

Expenses

The Festival should come in close to our budget projections.

Committee Team

In closing I want to give a shout out to all the Committee members who worked tirelessly to solve problems when at times the challenge seemed unsurmountable. A special thank you to Veronica and Len for keeping us on track.

The 2019 RPF was an overall success, I know that the committee will agree that we can do even better next year.

(See slide show for 2019 Polish Festival photos)