

WINNIPEG FOLK FESTIVAL

5 YEARS



JULY 10-13, 2025

ANNUAL REPORT
2025-2026

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The Winnipeg Folk Festival respects the Treaties that were made on this territory. In a spirit of reconciliation, we consult with an Indigenous Advisory Circle and other Indigenous partners throughout the year to further develop relationships and opportunities to share Indigenous culture at the Festival and our year-round activities.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR

This annual report provides a comprehensive overview of our organization's activities and financial statements for the year. It shows that we had another strong year in which we continued to break attendance records at our festival and had a strong concert series, all while staying true to our organizational values. This is in no small part due to our public funders, sponsors, donors, volunteers and audience members.

In our 2025/26 fiscal year the Winnipeg Folk Festival marked an important milestone with the delivery of our 50th festival and we took the opportunity to celebrate throughout the year.

In the winter of 2025, we delivered our library series so that folks could discover new music throughout the year for free. In the spring we held gatherings to honour those that got us to this point and made sure we told the story of the Festival far and wide so everyone could help celebrate this made in Manitoba story.

The spring of 2025 was also a period in which our government partners took time to celebrate the Festival's impact on the community.

This included a special acknowledgement from the Province of Manitoba, with a section of Highway 59 renamed Winnipeg Folk Fest Volunteer Way. This is a fitting tribute, as volunteers create our community, and without their dedication, there is no Winnipeg Folk Festival.

Mayor Scott Gillingham also recognized the Festival with the City's Community Service Award and hosted a luncheon in our honour, allowing us to celebrate alongside many of the people who have been crucial to the Festival's success. Lieutenant Governor Anita Neville hosted a gathering for our crew coordinators, staff, and board to thank them for their hard work in delivering the milestone event that brings so much joy to so many.

But of course, the real celebration was at the Festival itself, and tens of thousands came out to join in the fun.

We had smoky skies at the Festival for the first time in recent memory, which presented challenges, but our audiences remained enthusiastic and celebratory. They turned out to enjoy a line-up that celebrated our history by featuring artists from each decade and introducing them to performers who will be playing with us for years to come.

The thing about getting to 50 is you can see all the potential that lies ahead. When we think of what the festival looked like in 1974 compared to now, what might we look like in 2074? We look forward to building those next 50 years along with you and ensuring that people and music remain at the heart of everything we do.



Valerie Shantz
Executive Director



Graeme Findlay
Board Chair

STAFF AND BOARD

STAFF

Valerie Shantz
Executive Director

ARTISTIC

Chris Frayer
Artistic Director
Morgan Hamill
Artistic Coordinator

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Breanne Delaney
Finance & Administration Manager
Ryan Bruce
Finance Officer
Illyria Rennie
Office & Systems Coordinator

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Lee-Anne Van Buekenhout
Marketing & Communications Manager
Brittany May
Marketing & Communications Coordinator
Gino Castillo
Content Creator (to December 2025)

PRODUCTION

Arwen Helene
Production Manager
Katie Hohne
Production Coordinator
Nicole Anderson
Logistics Coordinator
Laurel Reynolds
Logistics Coordinator

SPONSORSHIP

Victoria King
Sponsorship & Development Manager
Darcy Cordeiro
Development Officer

VOLUNTEER RESOURCES

Karla Ferguson
Volunteer Resources Manager (to May 2025)
Quazi Alam
Volunteer Resources Manager (from July 2025)
Sarah Ans
Volunteer Resources Coordinator
Danielle Pilon
Volunteer Resources Coordinator (to August 2025)

SEASONAL STAFF

Sofie Hodges
Guest Services Assistant
Anisha Anderson
Finance Assistant
Emma Romanica
Box Office Administrator
Kamal Oderinu
Volunteer Resources Assistant
Kerri Stephens
Programs & Performer Services Assistant
Keeley Braunstein-Black
Production Assistant
Phoebe Yang
Box Office Administrator
Rachel Peters
Production Runner

BOARD

Graeme Findlay, Chair
Lucy Brandes, Vice Chair
Lucy Szkwarek, Past Chair
Adam Hanson, Treasurer
Nicole Ritchot, Secretary

Carey Richards
Cathy Steven
Eric Kananoja
Fran Taylor
Jenny Gerbasi

Michael Kelly
Michael Paluk
Ruth Shead
Valerie Shantz (ex officio)



MISSION AND VISION

MISSION

Creating experiences of discovery and learning through the celebration of people and music.

VALUES

Collaboration

We work with others who share our values to achieve our goals and build something greater. We cherish the culture of volunteerism and generosity of spirit that are the lifeblood of the Winnipeg Folk Festival.

Creativity

We inspire and engage our community by presenting strong and diverse talent, nurturing creativity and promoting artistic freedom.

Inclusiveness

We create environments that are welcoming, safe, accessible and respectful. We honour authenticity and celebrate diversity within our community.

Leadership

As leaders within the local and national arts community, we embrace best practices, share our expertise and learn from the experience of others.

Sustainability

We respect the contributions of those who have created our culture and organization. We are adaptable, resilient and thrive throughout change.

ARTISTIC VISION

Music is powerful. It changes perceptions, inspires imaginations, and impacts lives in a personal and meaningful way. Driving the evolution of folk music, the Winnipeg Folk Festival explores and redefines its relevance in today's world. By bringing together emerging talent and well-established artists, we influence and reshape the genre. We create opportunities for collaboration and spontaneity and will always push beyond expectations.

THE 2025 WINNIPEG FOLK FESTIVAL IN NUMBERS



PERFORMERS

76

Artists

80

Concerts

35

Workshops

28

Genres

15

Countries

AUDIENCE

79,160

2025 Festival attendance

9%

First-time attendees

56%

Have been attending the Festival for over 10 years

91%

of attendees were satisfied or very satisfied

VOLUNTEERS

2,513

Volunteers

130

Coordinators and Assistant Coordinators

505

First-time Volunteers

61

Volunteer Crews

91%

of volunteers were satisfied or very satisfied

SEASONAL

CONTRACT STAFF

58

Site Crews - build the site

42

Technicians - run the stages

12

Specialized Services - run specific site operations

MARKETING

1,435

Media stories including Globe and Mail, CBC, Exclaim! and Winnipeg Free Press

22K

Winnipeg Folk Festival E-Newsletter Subscribers

41K

Instagram Followers

38K

Facebook Likes

7.3K

Threads Followers

300+

Bluesky Followers

3K

YouTube Subscribers

1.5K

TikTok Followers

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF PEOPLE AND MUSIC

The 50th Festival celebrated five decades of people and music, sharing stories and programming through the lens of diverse artists, dedicated volunteers and a vibrant community.

The Festival welcomed an incredible 79,160 attendees, making 2025 the highest paid attendance in the Festival's history. Strong community support led to sold-out 4-Day, 4-Day with Camping and single-day tickets marking a milestone year.

DESIGN AND CREATIVE



50th Corporate Logo

In honour of our 50th we developed a logo to be used throughout the year, including for our concert series. Designed by Roberta Landreth, the commemorative logo reimagined the original banjo with a modern twist. Incorporating legacy colours and a "50" in the center, the design honoured the Festival's history while looking ahead to its future



Festival Creative

The 50th Festival's creative designed by Roberta Landreth, featured a Manitoban red fox curled around a banjo. Inspired by art nouveau and traditional line-cut styles, the artwork reflects both heritage and contemporary folk aesthetics. The fox—symbolizing adaptability, intelligence, and intuition and mirrors the Festival's ability to evolve while staying true to its core values.



PRE-FESTIVAL EVENTS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Library Series and Community Programming

The Festival revived its partnership with Winnipeg Public Library to present a free acoustic series featuring local artists, with a focus on artists who had participated in the Young Performers Program.

Little Stage in the Exchange

A new video series launched on the Festival's YouTube channel, showcasing performances from the 2024 Young Performers Program.

50 Years of Folk: The Evolution of a Festival (Website Project)

A six-part website series highlighted each decade of the Festival's history through timelines, archival photos, videos, artist listings and stories. The series created a living digital archive of the Festival that we can continue to add to over time.

Special Event: Celebrating 50 years of People and Music

The special event at the Fairmont Winnipeg brought together past and present staff, volunteers, partners, artists and community members whose dedication, vision and support over the decades made the milestone possible. The evening celebrated that legacy, included the sneak peek of the 2025 lineup and featured remarks from the Mayor of Winnipeg, Scott Gillingham, who presented the Festival with the City of Winnipeg Community Service Award.

Volunteer Experience Exchange

This initiative connected long-time and newer volunteers through a series of one-on-one and group discussions. These sessions fostered knowledge-sharing, strengthened intergenerational connections, and reinforced the Festival's community culture.

Photo Exhibit and Legacy Volunteer Celebration

In partnership with Little Brown Jug, the Festival hosted a preview of the 50 Years of Folk photo exhibit in May. The weekend long event invited attendees to explore a 1970s archival photo board while enjoying Folk Fest Lager. The preview opened with a special event honouring legacy volunteers who have been involved since the Festival's early days and, in the year leading up to the 50th, played a vital role in curating stories, memories and photos that captured the spirit of each decade.

Winnipeg Folk Fest Volunteer Way

In recognition of the Festival's impact, a section of Provincial Highway 59 was officially designated "Winnipeg Folk Fest Volunteer Way," celebrating the hundreds of volunteers who contribute annually to the event's success.

Mayor's Luncheon

Mayor Scott Gillingham hosted the board, staff, volunteers and artists with a luncheon in honour of the 50th Festival.



FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS AND SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

The 50th Festival featured a series of commemorative events and performances that honoured its legacy while celebrating its future:

50th Festival Celebration

An event where folks who have been attending for decades came to share memories and celebrate with fellow longtime folkies!

Long-Term Volunteer Gathering

A special gathering for long-term volunteers provided an opportunity to reconnect and celebrate their enduring contributions.

Clogging Workshop

Clogging has brought rhythm and energy to Winnipeg Folk Festival stages for years. Folks took part and learnt with the artists Leonard Podolak and Matt Gordon.

Square Dancing Workshop

A long-time folk tradition is square dancing. Folks took part and learnt from artist Willi Carlisle.

50th Hootenanny

A party in the best folk tradition, a hootenanny. The artists included: The Duhks, Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer with Chao Tian, Peter Paul Van Camp, David Essig, The Black Sea Station and Stephen Fearing.

Special Performance by Bruce Cockburn

A full circle moment, where Bruce Cockburn returned to the Festival he helped launch in 1974. As well, Mayor Scott Gillingham presented the key to the City to Bruce for his contributions to Winnipeg through the Festival.

Blackie and the Rodeo Kings

The iconic Canadian and Folk Fest favourite band closed the daytime stages on Sunday.

Additional on-site experiences included:

- *50 Years of Folk: The Evolution of a Festival* photo exhibit. This project was funded in part by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program.
- Storytelling videos on the Main Stage screens sharing audience and volunteer memories. This project was funded in part by the Province of Manitoba's From the Ground Up fund.
- Prairie Outdoor Exhibition featuring interactive art installations under the 50th Festival theme.
- Commemorative merchandise and a 50th souvenir program book.
- The return of the popular Folk Fest Lager with a commemorative 50th branding in partnership with Little Brown Jug.



POST-FEST CELEBRATIONS

In September, volunteer coordinators were honoured at a special event hosted by The Honourable Anita Neville, Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba, at Government House. Bringing together over 100 coordinators, staff, and board members, the evening celebrated milestone achievements, long standing service and the volunteer leadership.

In her remarks, the Lieutenant Governor reflected on the Festival's extraordinary volunteer legacy: "Each summer, a prairie Brigadoon pops up as the third largest city in Manitoba. That remarkable transformation of fields and forests into a musical community is the work of 2,500 volunteers - and especially the long-serving volunteer coordinators we recognize today."





JASON ISBELL AND THE 400 UNIT • LAKE STREET DIVE • GILLIAN WELCH & DAVID RAWLINGS

MAXAHATCHEE • PEACH PIT • MAVIS STAPLES • THE CAT EMPIRE

SPECIAL PERFORMANCE BY BRUCE COCKBURN
ANI DIFRANCO • THE PAPER KITES • ALLISON RUSSELL • BEGONIA RUBY WATERS • KEVIN MORBY • HURRAY FOR THE RIFF RAFF
THE LONE BELLOW • BEATS ANTIQUE • BLACKIE AND THE RODEO KINGS
NOELINE HOFMANN • BASIA BULAT • DENGUE FEVER • LA LOM • SAND LEYLA MCCALLA • ETRAN DE L'AÏR • ROBYN HITCHCOCK • LOS BITCHOS
CAMPER VAN BEETHOVEN • ROSE CITY BAND • SON ROMPE PERA • FRED PENNER
JEFFREY MARTIN • THE BLACK SEA STATION • VÍÍK • SLOW SPIRIT • ASHWIN BATISH
JAKE VADELAND & THE STURGEON RIVER BOYS • DAVID ESSIG • FOLK BITCH TRIO
YE VAGABONDS • JOLIE LAIDE • LES MAMANS DU CONGO X RROBIN • THE DUHKS
SOUSOU & MAHER CISSOKO • LEONARD SUMNER • LA CHIVA GANTIVA • DOMINIQUE ADAMS
EMILY NURRAMARA • DOUGIE POOLE • AL SIMMONS • ZRADA • CHRISTOPHER PAUL STELLING
MATT GORDON & LEONARD PODOLAK • MIA KELLY • MELBOURNE SKA ORCHESTRA • SUPALUNG
GUSTAVO & GREEN FOOLS THEATRE • THE LEE BOYS • PETUNIA & THE VIPERS • ROMI MAYES
PETER PAUL VAN CAMP • BLUE MOON MARQUEE • THE SWINGING BELLES • ZACKERY • CRISTINA VANE
THE ZAWOSE QUEENS • MARYNA KRUT • TWO CROWS FOR COMFORT • WACKYDOODLE DANCE PARTY
SUMMER BEAR & FRIENDS • OMBIGIZI • WILLI CARLISLE • DUANE ANDREWS • VIV AND RILEY
CATHY FINK & MARCY MARXER WITH CHAO TIAN • D'ORJAY AND THE LOVELY LUVIES FAM

BIRDS HILL PROVINCIAL PARK TICKETS AVAILABLE AT WINNIPEGFOLKFESTIVAL.CA



ARTISANS & VENDORS

HAND-MADE VILLAGE ARTISANS

The Hand-Made Village celebrates the long-standing history that arts and crafts share with folk music festivals. We welcomed artisans from all over who bring hand-crafted clothing, homewares, jewelry, kid's toys and so much more.

ACCESSORIES

Earth and Hide by Chuck Allen
Masagana Flower Farm & Studio by Lourdes Still
Oldhat by Nathan Dueck
Reclaim Goods by Anna-Marie Janzen

BODY PRODUCTS

Apothecandy by Leah Bauer
Aurora Farm by Aynsleigh Kerchak
Mehndi/Henna Tattoos by Aruna Hingwala

CLOTHING

Astrifer and Co. by Carly Gallant
Boomerang 360° by Kylie Stomp
Kristie MAH Clothing by Kristie Hamm
Kunai by Tussa Rosbud Kroeker
Mumble Tease by Heather Reinhardt
Phia by Sophia Nolan
Poison Pear by Beth Ardron
S A R A H S U E D E S I G N by Sarah MacLachlan
studio OCTAV/Lounge Lakers by Graham Epp
Sunny Blue by Caroline Wintoniw
The Quarrelsome Yeti Press by Geordan Moore

FOOD VENDORS

Food is a huge part of the Folk Fest experience. We are proud to offer Festival goers a delicious variety of ethical and sustainable food choices.

Festival Site

Bagelsmith
BBK's BBQ
Burrito Splendido
Cho Ichi Ramen Noodle
Chocolatier Constance Popp
Chosabi
East India Company
Fusion Stop
Gramma's Kettle Korn
Kawaii Crepe
King + Bannatyne
KYU Grill
Lemon Heaven
Little Bones Wings

Miss Christine's Kitchen
Pop Cart
Red River Co-op
Santa Lucia Greek
Santa Lucia Pizza
Sheepdog Brew Company
The Churro Stop

Festival Campground

Food for Folks
Jonnies Sticky Buns
Kalesa Korner
Simba Safari Grill

JEWELRY

aeliosdesign by Katerina Pappas
Alexandra Tumanov Jewellery by Alexandra Tumanov
Anishinaabe Girl Designs by Shauna Fontaine
bead n butter by Jessie Pruden
Beadwork by Nichol by Nichol Marsch
Blue Sky Jewelry by Amanda Greisman
Copper & Pine by Jessica Solta
dconstruct by Lisa Pointon-Reico
Everpressed Jewellery by Shawna Bannerman
Kat Cadegan Jewellery by Kat Cadegan
Macramaya Jewelry by Jasmine Van de Laar
Orange and Prairie by Caroline Mandarino
Pinotinoway by Martha Troian
Sheppards Hook by Katie Sheppard
Through Glass Images by Gail Penner

HOMEWARES

Alan Lacovetsky by Alan Lacovetsky
Aly Apocalypse Art by Aly Drabot
Brook Drabot Glass by Brook Drabot
Cheryle Dreaver Arts by Cheryle Dreaver
Earthshaper Studio by Crystal Nykoluk
Ed Dufort Fine Arts & Crafts by Ed Dufort
Fibre & Farm by Anna Hunter, Crystal Salkeld & Christel Lanthier
Hannah Guthrie Designs by Hannah Guthrie
Kelli Rey Studio by Kelli Rey
Kozmic Art by Shaylene Picard
Liminal Print Shop by Celeste Cote
Michael Astill Pottery by Michael Astill
potTerry by Terry Hildebrand
WOOL MOUNTAIN by Maureen Winnicki Lyons

INSTRUMENTS

Morning Glory Woodworking by John Bell & Molly Bell
Simply Bamboo by Scott Buxton

KIDS

Mya Papaya by Angie Tucker
ZAM!! by Lynet Dzaman



PRAIRIE OUTDOOR EXHIBITION

Art at Folk Fest comes in all shapes and forms, from the sounds on stage to the creative wardrobe of the crowd. The Prairie Outdoor Exhibition, Folk Fest's interactive outdoor art gallery, brings art to life in unexpected ways.

Inspired by the 50th Festival, 2025's theme was, fittingly, Festival memories, traditions and imagining the future.

ARTWORK

FOLKSONG 50
The Plead
Waterfall Light
Festival Echoes

Fates Archway
Stories From The
Ground Up
Headstocks

Forest Tapestry
The Fairy Folk Tree
Fearless Flight

Long May You Tarp Run
50th Anniversary
Labyrinth

Woodland Animals
50 First Festivals

Imperfect ideal
Celebration
Rewind

ARTIST

Maureen Winnicki Lyons
s.o.resident & Zach Ironstand
Shanelle St. Hilaire
Emilie St-Hilaire & Andrew Haggard
Grace Boyd & Sean McLachlan
Amanda Kindzierski & Valorie McCorrister
Laura Lee Harasym & André Péloquin-Hopfner
Karen Wardle
Darci Madlung & Janelle Lagasse
Glen Knapp & Charlene Beleyowski
Alison Foster
James Culleton
Amber Green
Cyrus Smith & Rachael Hoostraten Searle
Alireza Bayat
KC Adams
Chris Pancoe



VALUES IN ACTION

Indigenous Initiatives

The Winnipeg Folk Festival values its partnerships with Indigenous communities and is committed to showcasing Indigenous artists and culture throughout the Festival.

In 2025, this commitment was reflected through the participation of Indigenous performers, Handmade Village artisans, Prairie Outdoor Exhibition artists and Indigenous Initiatives on site.

- Grandmother Chickadee opened the Festival on Thursday evening with a blessing, joined by the Giinawind Riverbend Community School Abinoojiiyag Nagamog, an Indigenous Children's choir from the Ojibwe bilingual program in the Seven Oaks School Division.
- For the first time in recent history, Grandmother Chickadee opened the Main Stage each night with a blessing.
- An Indigenous space and a daily smudge was available for those who wished to participate.

Indigenous Performers

Blue Moon Marquee
Emily Wurramara
Leonard Sumner
OMBIIGIZI
Summer Bear & Friends
Grant Anderson



Indigenous Hand-Made Village Artisans

Anishinaabe Girl Designs by Shauna Fontaine
bead n butter by Jessie Pruden
Beadwork by Nichol by Nichol Marsch
Cheryle Dreaver Arts by Cheryle Dreaver
Everpressed Jewellery by Shawna Bannerman
Fibre & Farm by Christel Lanthier
Phia by Sophia Nolan
Pinotinoway by Martha Troian

Indigenous Prairie Outdoor Exhibition Artists

KC Adams : Celebration
Amanda Kindzierski & Valorie McCorrister : Stories from the Ground Up
Janelle Lagasse : The Fairy Folk Tree
Zac Ironstand : The Plead
Shanelle St. Hilaire : Waterfall Light



Sustainability

The Winnipeg Folk Festival runs sustainability programs at the annual Festival, in the office and at year-round events. The Festival values environmentally responsible practices and reducing our environmental impact. In 2025, we made great progress on-site as we keep working toward a more sustainable future.

- 51% total waste diversion. With a goal of 50%.
- 28% decrease in landfill waste from 2024.
- 1.1 lbs of waste per attendee, down 16% from 2024.
- We continue to partner with Compost Winnipeg to offer composting services across our entire site - including our backstage kitchen, food vendors, audience areas and Festival Campground.

Guest for A Day

The program offers families and members of community organizations, who may not otherwise be able to attend, a free day at the Festival, including transportation, meals, and a guided tour. In 2025, the Guest for A Day program accommodated 440 guests from 41 organizations/families.

Folk School

Our Folk School provides a platform for Festival attendees to engage, learn and connect through music, art and demonstrations. In 2025, the Folk School featured a range of creative workshops, including Square Dancing with Willie Carlisle, A Concert with a Side of Clogging with Matt Gordon & Leonard Podolak, Summer Bear & Friends, DJ workshop for kids with WackyDoodle Dance Party and Peter Paul Van Camp.

VALUES IN ACTION

Glass Banjo Award

The Glass Banjo Award honours the special folks who have made extraordinary contributions to the Winnipeg Folk Festival.

Ava Kobrinsky

Ava Kobrinsky is one of the visionary founders of the Winnipeg Folk Festival in 1974 and has since played an immeasurable role in the Canadian folk music scene. In 2021, she was inducted into the Order of Manitoba in recognition of her lifetime of service to the arts.



Gerry Couture

Gerry Couture was board chair during two pivotal eras of the Winnipeg Folk Festival, providing a steady presence through periods of growth and evolution. Now, as a proud donor alongside his partner, Chris, he continues to champion our future through ongoing support.



Accessibility

The Winnipeg Folk Festival is proud to provide services that help create a more accessible Festival. We are committed to lowering barriers for people with disabilities to attend the Festival, while acknowledging that barriers do exist.

- The Festival introduced two Accessibility Liaisons: one supporting volunteers at La Cuisine (the backstage kitchen) with meal access, and another at the Main Stage accessible seating area to assist patrons with access to the backstage accessible porta-potty and charging mobility devices.
- Pathways were improved, including a new path from Festival Village to the Green Ash Stage.
- The Festival offered Disability Awareness Resource Training (DART) to Security Folk, Wellness crew, Audience Services and the Accessibility Liaisons.



Young Performers Program

The Young Performers Program provides musicians aged 14 to 24 the chance to develop and refine their songs alongside artists from the Festival lineup, culminating in a performance on the Shady Grove stage before a Festival audience. In 2025, 37 young performers worked with mentors Basia Bulat, Jaxon Haldane, Duane Andrews and Erin Power, Leyla McCalla and Sam Brookes.



VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to our amazing volunteers! Their passion, dedication and hard work are the heartbeat of the Winnipeg Folk Festival. They show up year after year to help bring a complex event to life and turn it into something that truly feels like home. What they create together is more than a Festival; it's a true community.

Volunteer Highlights

- 2513 volunteers were welcomed to the Festival, a 3% increase over the previous year.
- 80% were returning volunteers.
- 91% of volunteers told us they were satisfied with their overall experience.
- 20 folks graduated from our Festival Security Program, filling out the Security Folk team and providing amazing people-centered support to the Folk Festival patrons.
- 95% of volunteers felt supported by their crew leadership, a testament to the exceptional leadership and care provided by our 130 volunteer coordinators.

SERVICE MILESTONES

Winnipeg Folk Festival celebrated 25 long-term volunteers reaching milestones ranging from 20 to 40 years of service.

We also recognized 18 coordinators for their incredible dedication and leadership for milestones of five years to 30 years.

For the first time in 2025, we celebrated the long-term Site Crew and Technical Staff. These dedicated folks build the Festival from the ground up, run the stages and work to leave the park in great condition.

Volunteer Milestones

40 Years

Carol Goossen
Elisabeth Dolin
Jennifer Pilgrim
Robert Tinker

30 Years

Bonnie Graham
Darlene Leier
Dave Mcknight
Fran Taylor
Heather Desmedt
Liz Drewnisz
Marion East
Robert Janz
Robert Zebrynski
Thom Sparling

20 Years

Brad Simmons
Brenda Currey
Candace Mutimer
Cheryl Butler
Denise Munn
Jocelyn Cordeiro
Jennifer Zolinski
Jenny Gerbasi
Karen Mozdzen
Rik Charambura
Stuart McMillan

Coordinator Milestones

5 Years

Alison Norberg
Chris Whitmore
Debra Kutcher
Ian Lodewyks
Kelsey Bencharski
Martin Blumrich
Thomas Aitken

10 Years

Chrissie Cooke
Erick Pelletier
Natty Somers
Silvio Marinelli
Stephanie Swain

15 Years

Kim Rowan
Lorne Penner
Tammy Rowan

20 years

Jody Smith

25 years

Paul Lambert

30 years

Carol Goossen

Site Crew Milestones

Russell Morden - 21 Years
Zeke Preston - 23 Years
Mike Warbanski - 26 Years
Ed Pacholok - 32 Years

Technical Milestones

Kevin Davis - 21 Years



YEAR-ROUND CONCERT SERIES

The concert series brings back Festival artists while introducing new favourites to Winnipeg stages. It connects the Festival community year-round, with concerts held at several venues across the city, including the Burton Cummings Theatre, the Park Theatre and the West End Cultural Centre.

Concerts

** Sold Out*

Mama's Broke with Dominique Adams

Jeremie Albino with Benjamin Dakota Rogers

Nathaniel Rateliff & The Night Sweats with The Teskey Brothers

Wild Rivers with Anna Graves

Noah Reid with Madeleine Roger

Jonathan Richman

Leith Ross (2 concerts)*

Julian Taylor & Logan Staats

The Strumbellas with The Honest Heart Collective

Foxwarren with Folk Bitch Trio*

Georgia Harmer with Taylor Jackson

Ariel Posen with Wendlo

JP Hoe Hoe Hoe Holiday Show*

Jake Vaadeland's "Goodness Gracious It's Christmas!"*

FONTINE

SUPPORTERS

As a charitable, non-profit arts organization, the Winnipeg Folk Festival is deeply grateful to our donors, sponsors, funders and partners whose generosity ensures that Folk Fest continues to bring incredible music and a welcoming community together year after year.

Memory Lane

In 2025, the Festival unveiled Memory Lane, a canopied pathway that honours individuals who have made Folk Fest personally meaningful with inscribed plaques. In its first year, eight plaques were installed along the path, including one to honor the Festival's founders - Mitch Podolak, Bill Merritt and Rosalie Goldstein.

Online Auction

The return of the online auction in 2025 saw our community come together to raise over \$23,000 in support of the Guest for A Day and Young Performers Program. Packages like the RV-IP and Five Star Folkie were among the most sought-after prizes, showing that participants value experiences that help them make the most of their Festival weekend.

Donors

In 2025, 291 donors, including 52 monthly supporters and 94 first-time contributors, helped sustain our Festival and amplify the transformative power of music. Donor generosity sparks joy, ignites imaginations and fosters connections that make each summer at Birds Hill Park unforgettable. (See 2025 donor list on page 20.)

Sponsors

Many suppliers, local businesses and organizations and corporations provide resources and expertise to help stage the annual Winnipeg Folk Festival. We gratefully acknowledge and thank these folks for their invaluable contributions and support. (See 2025 sponsor list on page 19.)



INVESTORS



PARTNERS



SUPPORTERS



COLLABORATORS



MEDIA



FUNDERS



Canadian Heritage

Patrimoine canadien

Funded in part by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program



WINNIPEG ARTS COUNCIL



FRIENDS

Ocean Trailer
 Ole Cocktail Company
 Peg City Car Co-op
 Premier Printing
 Special T-Shirt Company
 Valley Fiber

Front Gate
 Beaver Bus Lines
 Bison Fire
 King's Head Pub
 Kings Transfer
 Manitoba Music

ANNUAL DONORS

February 1, 2025 - January 31, 2026

* Monthly Donors

\$10,000+

Howard E. Mandshein - In Memory of Lori Sigurdson
Gail Asper, O.C., O.M., LL.D & Michael Paterson
The Estate of Cathie Starkell
Anne Mahdi

\$5,000-\$9,999

The Grosberg Family Fund at the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba
Gerry & Chris Couture
Ocean Trailer

\$2,500-\$4,999

Amanda Douglas
Eric Kananaja & Kristine Betker
Herb Peters & Donna Peters-Small
Wayne Drury - In Memory of Beda Drury

\$1,000-\$2,499

Phil Veldhuis & Vona Guiler*
David Strang & Kristel van Ineveld*
Nicole Ritchot*
Don Hurst - In Memory of Steven Hurst, Eugene Kostyra, and
Joseph Warbanski
Dr. Garry Smith
Lorne Mack & Cindy Marie Small
Andrew Froese & Kali Spencer
Cathy & Wayne Harder
Rae Optical Ltd.
Marie Friesen
Les & Terry Wiens*
Jon Singleton* - In Memory of Barbara Hiebert
Valerie Shantz*
Kendra Bembenek - In Memory of Katherine Martin
Anonymous - In Memory of Thomas Epp
Graeme Findlay & Samantha Frost
Shandra & Brent Czarnecki
Murray & Gail Singer
Kirsten Earl McCorrister* - In Memory of Ian McCorrister
Ted Bock & Liane Chalmers-Bock*
Colette Havens & Michael Jerch
Nicole and Adam Hanson
Jan Williams - In memory of Terry Williams Zoë Kogan
and Laurence Katz
Dave Christianson & Vera Steinberger
Christine Strike - In Memory of Jakub Marshall Kolisnyk
Jacqueline Crone - In Memory of Eric Crone
Tannis Webster - In Memory of Mark Webster
Charlotte Ashcroft - In Memory of Jordan Braun
Graeme & Joyce Lowden
Meg Gray - In Memory of Alan Einarson
Yvonne Peters & Howard Miller
Ashleigh Everett & Stuart Murray
Nicole Anderson - In Memory of Bill Tamrie
Donna Kurt - In Memory of Rich & Alice

\$500-\$999

Lucy Brandes*
Sara Whitehead
Anna Nault - In Memory of Harry Paine
Wayne Amos - In Memory of Marlene Hochbaum
Cynthia Plett
Lynne Skromeda* - In Memory of Jim Skromeda
Kathryn Bernard
Amy Greenwood*
Ashlea George* - In Honour of Arthur & Stephanie George
Karen-Denise Cyr & John McLennan*
Terry Sargeant & Margaret Haney*
Karen Dana & Harry Havey
Ben & Shari Diamond
Cathy Steven*
Jeff Leclerc
Lucy & Louis Szkwarek
Brenda Sue Taylor
Michael Paluk
Carey Richards
Stantec Consulting Ltd.
Ruth Shead
A.C. Robinson
Helene Sward - In Memory of David W. Sward
Linda A. Harlos & Adrian Wildsmith

\$250-\$499

Bob & Karen McManus*
Eugene Boychuk*
Ron Bailey*
Richard McCorrister
Kelvin Seifert & Barbara Fuller
Linda Klann
Karen O'Brien
Wallace Steve Brooker - In Memory of Mary Paradoski
Terri-Lynn Strand - In Memory of Richard Strand
Leslie Kirby - In Memory of Jim Kirby
Deborah Handziuk
Wally Borysyk
Chris Frayer & Miriam Jezik*
Billy Brodovsky & Libby Yager*
Anita Wolfe*
Kelly McArthur* - In Memory of Crystal Einfeld
Bill Johnson
George Turner
Meagan Anderson*
Jonathon Kovacs & Vanessa Burokas* - In Memory of John Prine
Linda Freed - In Honour of Mitch Podolak and Ava Kobrinsky
Fred Goeke
Kareen Penner - In Memory of Ken Chambers
Tania Douglas* - In Memory of Peter Mark Kucparic
Terence Wiebe*
Katherine Fox*
Jennifer Lundin*
Greg Docker & Fran Taylor
Tom and Shirley Strutt - In Memory of Brendan Berg and
Olivia Michalczuk
Marlene Stern - In Memory of Susan Stern and Jocelyn Katz
Iris Reimer

\$100-\$249

Stacy Bender*
 Tannis Buzza*
 Jillian Kondra*
 Lisa Strong & Mike Jurkow* - In Honour of Home Care Workers
 Henry Fast
 Laura Bergen*
 Dr. Denis Champagne
 Karla Ferguson & Sean McManus
 Bryan & Berni Harley
 Lorena Trann
 Liz the folkie
 Morgan Hamill & Damon Mitchell*
 Heather Kozubski
 Heather Sandilands
 Jenny Gerbasi
 Gail Postnicks - In Memory of Brenda Postnicks
 Sarah Granzow - In Memory of Morley James Tichborne
 Michele Kolba
 Kimberley Coxe - In Memory of John Prentice
 Ray Hesslein
 Amanda Wilson
 Tim Turner
 Julie Johnson* - In Memory of Eleanor May Fines
 Shannon Rogalski*
 Dafna Schultz*
 Mark & Zoe Simkin*
 Katherine Fitzpatrick - In Memory of Joan K. Fitzpatrick
 Valerie Kosman - In Memory of Joan K. Fitzpatrick
 Patrick Fitzpatrick - In Memory of Joan K. Fitzpatrick
 Mike Fitzpatrick - In Memory of Joan K Fitzpatrick
 Lori Haveruck-McGraw
 Holly Nagamori-Cain - In memory of Art Cain
 Catherine Mackay - In memory of Kurt Fey, Art Cain,
 and Richard Cain
 Richard Cain - In memory of Kurt Fey, Art Cain,
 and Richard (Dick) Cain
 Janet Quitnero - In memory of Kurt Fey, Art Cain, and Dick Cain
 Karen Cockrane - In Memory of Joan K. Fitzpatrick
 Bill Burrows - In Memory of Joan K. Fitzpatrick
 Nanette McKay
 Brenda Currey - In Memory of Christopher A Hayward
 Susan Kasian
 Leslie Hatrick - In Memory of Harry Paine
 Kathy Mulder
 Michael Rennie
 Anne Friesen
 Josephine Cox & Brian Falck
 Bill & Pat Reid - In Memory of Bob Smith
 Mark McLoughlin*
 Samara May*
 Matthew TenBruggencate* - In Memory of Trish
 Georgia Kerr & Duane Cheskey*
 Bessie Hamilton*
 Wendy Tod
 Lisa Fehr*
 Kyle Hedlund*
 Kathy & Rollin Penner*
 Charlyene Cosens* - In Memory of Gil Unger
 Kevin Stuart - In honour of Dorothy and Ken
 Kristal Leebrick - In Honour of Mitch Podolak
 Ken Carpenter

Charlie Sussman
 James Waytowich
 Paul Kresko
 Jennifer Pilgrim
 Heather Lamoureux
 Arlene Forsyth
 Rob Henry* - In Memory of Victoria Sawatzsky
 Laura Shabaga
 Audrey Smith
 Cary & Janet Hamel
 Shaleem Hosein
 Heather Flanagan
 Patty Roshier
 Dr Kristin Maria Heinrichs Medical Corp
 Louise Hart - In Memory of Grant Faithful
 Wally Stewart
 Martin & Darlene Blumrich - In Honour of Karla and Colette
 Norm Hiebert
 Brian Boychuk
 Debbora Hurrell
 Nancy & Kurt Clyde
 Mary MacLellan - In Memory of Robert MacLellan
 Irina Ivanov Bissonnette
 Bruce Larson
 Jordan Ross
 Valdine Ciwko and Gary Cristall - In Memory of Harry Paine
 Ian MacIntyre
 Carolyn Stienstra
 Colleen A. McKenty
 Don Nazeravich
 Gayle Michalyszyn
 Bruce Roe
 Brent Nellis*
 Wesley Postma
 Gwen Waedt

\$20 - \$99

Shannon McGill*
 Rowena Lunn
 Kelly & Jen Kjartanson
 John Gordon
 Kerry Ryan
 Jo-Anne Kulesza
 Lora Meseman
 Monica Penner
 Kelly Janz
 Ron Hector
 Christine Sargeant
 Jodi Schmidt
 Jeffrey Easton
 Susan Watchman
 Gayle Robertson
 Jodi Schmidt
 Karen & Richard Howell
 Inge Emmonds - In Memory of Anne Mahdi
 Maxine Kaufman
 Ronald Maier
 Janice Butcher
 Ross G. Taylor
 Norma Atamanchuk

Kyle Dear
David Clement
Kathryn Winchell
Claude Labine
Jonelle Simms
Kate Sawyer
Nicole Plett Laurendeau
Ruth Simkin
Hannah Willms
Danielle Jaworsky
Susan Harrison
Nikki Zloty
Pamela Whaley
Diana Cornish
Allan Finkel & Barbara Newman
Phyllis Clemens
David Barne
Darcy Cordeiro
Ernst Pijning
Lynn Dupuis
Rob Walger
Ingrid Bolbecher - In Memory of Randolph Edward Jestin
Craig & Melanie Leonhardt
Devan Ostapyk
Patricia Wasmund
Benjamin Cockshott
Nancy Becker
Milton Kirkpatrick
Melissa Driscoll
Kelsey Ho
Pamela Greig
Julia Thiessen
Dawson Foerster
Michael Levine
Niels Billund
Elizabeth Miller
Patrick OConnor
Emily Denton
Blaine Mooney
Lillian A Smith
Carolyn Whyte
Debra Young
Wayne Yarchuk
Jeff Dyck
Hillary King
Karla Gantenbein - In Memory of Harry Payne
Edward Vorst
Zachary LeClerc
Milton Kirkpatrick



THE WINNIPEG CENTENNIAL FOLK FESTIVAL INC.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

JANUARY 31, 2026

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITOR ON THE SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

To the Members of
The Winnipeg Centennial Folk Festival Inc.

Opinion

The summary financial statements, which comprise the summary statement of financial position as at January 31, 2026, the summary statement of operations and the summary statement of changes in net assets for the year then ended, and related notes, are derived from the audited financial statements of The Winnipeg Centennial Folk Festival Inc. (the "Organization") for the year ended January 31, 2026. We expressed a qualified audit opinion on those financial statements in our report dated May 4, 2026.

In our opinion, the accompanying summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements, on the basis described in Note 1. However, the summary financial statements are subject to the equivalent scope limitation as the audited financial statements of the Organization for the year ended January 31, 2026.

Summary Financial Statements

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. Reading the summary financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements and the auditor's report thereon.

The Audited Financial Statements and Our Report Thereon

We expressed a qualified audit opinion on the audited financial statements in our report dated May 4, 2026. The basis for our qualified audit opinion is based on the fact that, in common with many charitable organizations, the Organization derives revenue from donations and fundraising, the completeness of which is not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, the evidence we obtained for these revenues was limited to the amounts recorded in the records of the Organization. Therefore, we were unable to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to donations and fundraising revenue, excess of revenue over expenses and cash flows from operations for the years ended January 31, 2026 and January 31, 2025, current assets at January 31, 2026 and January 31, 2025 and net assets at the beginning and end of the year for the years ended January 31, 2026 and January 31, 2025.

Management's Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements on the basis described in Note 1.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.

May 4, 2026
Winnipeg, Canada



Chartered Professional Accountants

THE WINNIPEG CENTENNIAL FOLK FESTIVAL INC.

Summary Statement of Financial Position

January 31, 2026

	2026	2025
Assets		
Current assets:		
Cash	\$ 2,585,677	\$ 3,196,158
Accounts receivable	795,772	1,022,658
Prepaid expenses and deposits	37,120	241,352
	<u>3,418,569</u>	<u>4,460,168</u>
Capital assets	<u>2,757,831</u>	<u>2,094,825</u>
	<u>\$ 6,176,400</u>	<u>\$ 6,554,993</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 109,973	\$ 157,137
Government remittances payable	34,972	52,030
Deferred revenue	764,889	1,017,658
	<u>909,834</u>	<u>1,226,825</u>
Deferred capital contributions	<u>1,619,145</u>	<u>1,682,453</u>
	<u>2,528,979</u>	<u>2,909,278</u>
Net assets:		
Invested in capital assets	1,138,686	412,372
Internally restricted	542,357	538,457
Unrestricted	1,966,378	2,694,886
	<u>3,647,421</u>	<u>3,645,715</u>
	<u>\$ 6,176,400</u>	<u>\$ 6,554,993</u>

See accompanying notes to the summary financial statements.

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:

 _____ Director

 _____ Director

THE WINNIPEG CENTENNIAL FOLK FESTIVAL INC.

Summary Statement of Operations

Year ended January 31, 2026

	2026	2025
Revenue:		
Grants and contributions	\$ 583,212	\$ 557,364
Sales and other revenue:		
Summer festival	4,846,778	4,626,780
Resource development	1,156,728	930,587
Concert series	267,603	289,417
Administrative and other	86,510	148,936
Community programs	90,653	52,777
Income from endowment fund	117,501	106,899
	6,565,773	6,155,396
Total revenue	7,148,985	6,712,760
Cost of sales	342,425	279,906
Gross profit	6,806,560	6,432,854
Expenses:		
Summer festival	3,880,807	3,698,312
Resource development	685,585	509,002
Administrative	1,945,094	1,826,460
Concert series	215,851	218,840
Community programs	71,243	58,923
Visual arts	6,274	5,300
	6,804,854	6,316,837
Excess of revenue over expenses for the year	\$ 1,706	\$ 116,017

See accompanying notes to the summary financial statements.

THE WINNIPEG CENTENNIAL FOLK FESTIVAL INC.

Summary Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year ended January 31, 2026

	Invested in capital assets	Internally restricted	Unrestricted	Total 2026	Total 2025
Net assets, beginning of year	\$ 412,372	\$ 538,457	\$ 2,694,886	\$ 3,645,715	\$ 3,529,698
(Deficiency) excess of revenue over expenses for the year	(96,168)	3,900	93,974	1,706	116,017
Purchases of capital assets	895,282	-	(895,282)	-	-
Capital contributions	(72,800)	-	72,800	-	-
Net assets, end of year	\$ 1,138,686	\$ 542,357	\$ 1,966,378	\$ 3,647,421	\$ 3,645,715

See accompanying notes to the summary financial statements.

THE WINNIPEG CENTENNIAL FOLK FESTIVAL INC.

Notes to Summary Financial Statements

Year ended January 31, 2026

1. Basis of presentation

The summary financial statements have been prepared from the audited financial statements of The Winnipeg Centennial Folk Festival Inc. for the year ended January 31, 2026. The audited financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. The criteria applied in the preparation of the summary financial statements are that the summary financial statements include the major operating activity totals and subtotals and year end balances derived from the audited financial statements.

The audited financial statements of The Winnipeg Centennial Folk Festival Inc. for the year ended January 31, 2026 and the independent auditor's report thereon are available by contacting the Organization's head office located at 203-211 Bannatyne Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba.





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