

Town's first Street Faire a big success

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READING - A few thousand festival goers are estimated to have descended upon downtown Reading yesterday, which helped to make the first annual Fall Street Faire a huge success, according to organizers.

Large crowds were scene working their way through the various events and activities throughout the afternoon, while some vendors reported selling out of their wares and menu items before the event wrapped up late in the afternoon.

After months of organizing, the Fall Street Faire planners could finally exhale late yesterday, and deemed the day a success for all involved.

“Over all I’m am stunned and thrilled by the crowds,” said Sheila Clarke, Co-Chair of the Planning Committee behind the Faire. “I cannot believe how many people came to support the town and event. As far as the volunteers, the only word that comes to mind is ‘Outstanding’. I do not believe anyone realizes the amount of detail and commitment that is required to get this event accomplished. This town is a better place because these people are in it.”

The festive event was held to celebrate the completion of the downtown improvements, and featured:

Live Music, Dance and Street Performers

Arts and Crafts Vendors

Local Artists and Product Demonstrations

Sidewalk Sales

Moon-Bouncers, Face Painting, Train Rides

Antique Car Show

Restaurant and Food Vendors

Children’s Games

Oktoberfest beer tasting

and a Dog Show, as well as performing acts on three different stages.

In future years, if the Faire is held again as hoped, it will conceivably be easier to organize because the blueprint and contact list has been created. This year the planning committee was working from scratch, which made it that much harder to pull together.

“The most challenging part to me is by far remembering all the details,” said Clarke. “Michele Williams, John Russell, and Meghan Tafoya did not leave a stone unturned. We had so many vendors tell us this was the most organized event they have ever participated in. I find that to be a testament to the organization these people brought to the table. I take away from it two rewarding things – first was definitely having the businesses and residents be happy and proud of the event. And second was showing that Reading can run this type of an event successfully.”

Does she wish she or others had done anything differently?

“I haven’t thought about improvements just yet, other than wearing better sneakers myself,” said Clarke.

The event was kicked off with a downtown ribbon-cutting ceremony, which featured remarks by Town Manager Peter Hechenbleikner, Board of Selectmen Chairman Ben Tafoya, Representative Brad Jones, and Congressman John Tierney.