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Orangeville Ribfest deemed successful with more than 22,000 attending

Written By **Sam Odrowski**

The 15th Annual Rotary Club of Orangeville Ribfest brought more than 22,000 to the Alder Recreation Centre playing fields last weekend.

Residents of Orangeville and the surrounding area enjoyed all things BBQ from July 19 to 21, with six ribbers set up over those three days, in addition to a wide selection of food vendors.

Charles McCabe from the Rotary Club of Orangeville helps organize the event each year and said much of its success depends on the weather, which was great last weekend.

?This is a weather driven event, so if we have good weather, we make more money. If we have bad weather, we have less money,? McCabe explained.

He said he anticipates with the good weather this year, once all the final numbers are tallied, around $75,000 will be raised for the Orangeville Rotary Club. This money stays in the community and is used to support local not-for-profits and community projects, like the redevelopment of Rotary Park or the Rotary Splashpad at Fendely Park.

Overall, McCabe said the Ribfest provided a great weekend event to those who came out.

?We have nothing but good feelings all around? I think lots of people enjoyed what we had to offer,? McCabe said. ?We had the climbing wall for the KIDSFEST, which was new this year and that seemed to be well used.?

He added that the Rotary Club will look at further expanding the KIDSFEST for the Ribfest in 2025 due to its popularity this year.

The Classic Car Show on Saturday, July 21, was the largest McCabe's seen since he started helping with the event.

?I don't think I've seen that many cars on the field in the years that I've done this,? he remarked. ?That was great to see.?

The Campfire Poets, a popular local cover band, had a large audience to perform for as the closing act on Saturday, July 20. Dufferin County Line headlined on the Friday, July 19 and The Hit Disturbers headlined on Sunday, July 21, both playing to sizeable crowds.

When looking at the awards at this year's Ribfest, Gator BBQ won the Judges Choice Best Ribs category, while Jack the Ribber won in the Judges Choice Best Sauce category. The People's Choice was awarded to Fat Boys BBQ.

The Ribfest is made possible each year through the help of many volunteers, sponsors, and the Rotary Club of Orangeville.

The club would like to thank the Lord Dufferin IODE for manning its pop and water tent on Friday, July 19. The club would also like to thank the 4th Orangeville Scouts for working the tent on Saturday, July 20 and the Ontario Minor Hockey (OMH) U13 AA team for covering the station on Sunday, July 21.

The OMH's U18A Flyers team helped with the setup at Ribfest as well.

Admission to the event was free but donations were encouraged.

?We always want to thank the community for supporting rotary events,? said McCabe. ?I think people understand why we do this, and there's a lot of goodwill there.?