

National Folk Festival officials estimate 50,000 attendees

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[NASHVILLE](#), TN (WSMV) - A weekend of rough weather couldn't stop the music on Bicentennial Mall.

Organizers of the National Folk Festival say they are pleased with attendance figures for the first year of the event's three-year run in Nashville.

"We were so pleased with the turnout and the caliber of talent," festival director Allison Cutler said.

Workers were tearing down the stages and cleaning up Monday from a busy weekend in downtown Nashville.

"It was the most wonderful thing I think we've had in Nashville in years, as far as innovative and new and doing something to bring the multicultural community together," festival attendee Alice Sells said.

The National Folk Festival attracted an estimated 50,000 people over the weekend.

It was not as many as those in charge wanted, but then again the weather didn't fully cooperate.

"In [the heat](#) on Saturday, 100 degrees. And in the rain on Sunday, there were families coming out," Cutler said. "There were people, individuals walking around. We were just so pleased."

That doesn't mean there won't be changes next year.

As with anything, the folk festival will grow next year.

"And I think we know that we need to communicate better how this park's laid out, how we're using the park and where to go to get great music. And then where to go to get your food, your drinks and things like that," Cutler said.

Alice Sells plans to be back next year, realizing the festival isn't just a weekend's worth of benefit.

"I couldn't be more impressed. And I'm sure Nashville feels the same," she said.

The folk festival will return to Nashville in 2012 and 2013, which will incidentally be its 75th anniversary. From there, hope is it will become a state folk festival with its own tradition for years to come.

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