

Despite the rain, Kamloops celebrates Canada's 151st Birthday

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KAMLOOPS — It was one of wettest Canada Day Celebrations anyone in Kamloops could recall.



Despite the rain, Canada Day at Riverside Park started off as planned, with a number of local politicians and dignitaries on stage for the Opening Ceremonies.

B100's Cheryl Blackwell MC'd the opening ceremony, which saw MP Cathy McLeod, as well MLA's Todd Stone and Peter Milobar, and Mayor Ken Christian all speak.

The ceremony also included a simultaneous cross-country drumming event, which hoped to set a world record.

"We actually pulled off what's called Drum Canada in the opening ceremonies, which was a nation-wide simultaneous drum session," Canada Day Entertainment Coordinator Graham Specht told CFJC Today. "We were going for a Guinness Book of World Records record... the most ethnicities drumming together all at once."

Shortly after the Canada Day opening ceremonies, the skies above Kamloops opened up, drenching the festivities at Riverside Park. While the rain persisted throughout the day, the people did their best to enjoy the celebration despite the less than ideal weather.

“It’s nicer when it’s sunnier out, but we’re still here,” said one Dad.

“It could be drier,” one visitor from Vancouver said. “But it’s good, it’s really fun.”

“Regardless of the rain, it’s been fun,” one young lady in the International Food Pavilion said.

For those who stuck it out despite the rainy weather, the annual Folkfest was in full swing, with the usual vendors, a whole host of multicultural food options, and of course, the entertainment

Madison Olds played the Food Pavillon stage, one of her last shows in the city before heading off to London to record her album.

“I love coming out and seeing this whole community out supporting everyone,” Olds said. “It’s so heartwarming because as an artist, this is what allows me to play, and to put out music.”

Specht says he believes the fact the event highlights the diverse range of cultures that exist in the city is one reason Kamloops continues to come down to the park year after year.

“The thing that I think keeps... Kamloopsians coming back every year is that there is a real cultural focus underlying the event,” Specht explained. “It’s not just food trucks and rock n’ roll.”

Organizers also made an effort to include more indigenous performers on the stages at the park this year

“We really got a chance to feature some indigenous performers, and that really picks up from last year,” Specht said.

And despite the rain falling throughout the day, the fireworks display went off without a hitch.
A perfect end to a less than perfect Canada Day.