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2004 KUTZTOWN FESTIVAL MEASURES SUCCESS IN MANY WAYS

How do you measure the success of one of the nation's premier folklife festivals?

"Maybe the best measure is what people tell us candidly in our visitors opinion surveys," says Executive Director Dave Fooks. "Last summer, over 90% of the persons who responded rated the attractions in our festival as excellent or good," he reported.

Another indicator is that for each of the past three years, attendance at the festival has been consistently over 100,000. "This means both that individuals and families come back and that new visitors are discovering the festival. We are especially pleased that families with children now are a large part of our audience," Fooks said.

But there are other important ways to measure success.

For example, how important is the festival for the community and region as a whole? The annual economic impact of the Kutztown Festival as measured by the International Festival and Events Association is estimated at over \$10 million – reflecting both direct and indirect spending by visitors, vendors, suppliers, and temporary employment and local tax revenue generated.

Over 1,000 jobs are created for the duration of the nine-day festival, and twenty-six local non-profit organizations raise money for their own purposes through the sale of food and other items. For many of these groups, this is the major fund-raiser of the year.

About 140 local organizations and business sponsors are partners with the festival each year, providing support and, in turn, receiving recognition and visibility for their products and services.

Success is also measured in how well the Festival accomplishes its purposes.

With its focus on Pennsylvania German history and traditions, the festival has developed a strong relationship with the Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center at Kutztown University, the Pennsylvania German Society, and local groups such as the Grundsow and Versammlung lodges and the Pennsylvania Dutch Hex Tour Association –

all of which are represented at the festival. Every day during the festival, the seminar stage has presentations on more than a dozen topics of Pennsylvania Dutch life and lore.

A partnership with the Kommern Museum in the Rhineland region of Germany brings outstanding musical groups to the Festival each summer. The Rhineland is the area from which most Pennsylvania Germans emigrated in the 18th and early 19th centuries.

The festival draws 220 top artisans who demonstrate their skills in Pennsylvania German and other Early American crafts. In the past few years, the festival has hosted the largest sale of traditional handmade quilts in the nation - about 3,500 were available last year. Among the quilts purchased at the special quilt auction of the top prizewinners in 2004 was one which sold for a record \$8,400.

Just how well the festival is succeeding is reflected in its selection by *ArtFair Sourcebook* as ninth among the top 600 craft festivals in the country in 2004, and by the *American Bus Association* as one of the top tour destinations in North America in 2000 and 2002, and is ranked as twenty-first among all events nationally by *Sunshine Artists*. Locally, *Berks County Living Magazine*'s readers have chosen the festival as the best in the county for the past two years. In 2004, the readers of *The Morning Call* chose the Kutztown Festival for "One Of The Best" of the Lehigh Valley.

For 56 consecutive years, a folklife festival has been held at the Kutztown Fairgrounds to celebrate the colorful heritage of German settlers who came to the region two centuries ago and became known as the "Pennsylvania Dutch." The dates for the 2005 Kutztown Festival are July 2 to July 10.