Oktoberfest Generates More Than $80,000 in Economic Impact in Great Falls

Third annual event drew approximately 1,800 attendees while supporting local businesses and creating another reason to visit Great Falls

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Great Falls, Montana - The third annual Oktoberfest brought an estimated $80,632 in economic impact to the community, demonstrating how locally created events can contribute to Great Falls' visitor economy while adding to the experiences that make the city a destination.

Held Friday, September 25th, in the "Fun Hundred" block of Central Avenue, Oktoberfest drew approximately 1,800 attendees. An estimated 8% of attendees came from outside the area or stayed overnight in Great Falls.

Great Falls Montana Tourism financially supported the event as part of its efforts to encourage events and experiences that attract visitors, support local businesses and give people more reasons to spend time in Great Falls.

"Oktoberfest is a great example of what can happen when local businesses take an idea and create an experience people want to be part of," said Rebecca Engum, Executive Director of Great Falls Montana Tourism. "Supporting creative local events helps strengthen what visitors can experience in Great Falls while generating economic activity for our community."

Oktoberfest was created through a collaboration between Annie's Taphouse, KellerGeist, and Celtic Cowboy, with additional partners and sponsors including Hotel Arvon, Tracy's Family Diner, Downtown Great Falls, Great Falls Montana Tourism, Gusto Distributing and Eagle Beverage.

The event transformed the 100 block of Central Avenue with beer tastings, food, live music, games and the official Samuel Adams Stein Hoist Challenge. The collaboration among businesses and organizations allowed the event to offer multiple experiences within the block rather than center around a single venue.

Now in its third year, the event continues to draw a substantial crowd while organizers look for opportunities to build its reach beyond Great Falls.

"The whole goal of this is to make it a regional event," said Dan Morano, owner of Annie's Taphouse and one of the Oktoberfest organizers.

Events like Oktoberfest can give visitors another reason to choose Great Falls and spend money at local hotels, restaurants, retailers and other businesses. They also add to the mix of experiences available in the community, helping turn local ideas into tourism assets with the potential to attract visitors from outside the area.

Hear from Dan about the creation and continuation of Oktoberfest on Visit Great Falls' podcast "We're No Dam Experts" episode 299. Listen now wherever you get your podcasts, on the Visit Great Falls YouTube channel, or at https://werenodamexperts.com.

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