

Purple Valley event a success

Maple syrup festival draws 1,200

By PHIL McNICHOL
Sun Times correspondent

PURPLE VALLEY — More than 1,200 people braved brisk east winds and grey skies Saturday for a feast of pancakes soaked in Purple Valley maple syrup.

The 16th annual festival drew plenty of "out-of-towners" who were impressed not only with the food but the setting.

Jack Crawford and a group of friends were enjoying their pancakes behind the old schoolhouse and watching the activity.

"I love it," Crawford said.

Celebrating his first day of retirement from a Sarnia chemical plant he's looking forward to more of "all the fresh air up here".

The Sobiera family from Kitchener come to the Purple Valley festival every year.

Describing it as "quaint and friendly" in comparison to the larger Elmira syrup festival, Stan Sobiera said they prefer the Purple Valley event - "and the pancakes are great", he added.

Making a first appearance at the festival, The Nawash Singers and Dancers from Cape Croker performed in traditional native dress and were a big hit.

Visitors crowded between tables of local crafts to watch the musicians and young dancers, performing on a small stage inside because of the cold.

The crowd also enjoyed piper Dave Hayward of Owen Sound and free pony rides were popular with youngsters.

The recently expanded commu-



Sun Times photo

NOT TOO SURE — Three-year-old Barbara Weir looks a little uncertain as she gets ready to taste pancakes offered by her dad

Dave at the Purple Valley Maple Syrup Festival Saturday. Brother Benjamin, six months, is more interested in what's going on elsewhere.

nity centre was bulging at the seams Saturday night for a country style dance and people were turned away at the door.

"We'll have to expand it again"

commented a Purple Valley resident.

Organizers pronounced the Purple Valley Maple Syrup Festival a success.

As one Bruce Peninsula resident commented Saturday the event is "quite an accomplishment" for a small community.

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