



Sherry Wilson and Barry Wotten, both of Oshawa, have been the first to enter the Shelter Valley Folk Festival for each of the past 13 years. Volunteers (in red shirts) line up to clap them onto the grounds when the festival opens Friday afternoon every Labour Day Weekend. VALERIE MACDONALD/NORTHUMBERLAND TODAY

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GRAFTON — Sunshine poured down on the hilly terrain of the Shelter Valley Folk Festival's annual Labour Day mix of music, artistic endeavours, sustainable living philosophies, locally grown and prepared foods, and good times.

While many campers had already set up previously on the high ground overlooking the main and side stages, a crowd gathered at the main gates (after parking cars or their bicycles) waiting to be clapped into the festival by a double line of volunteers sporting red t-shirts.

Sherry Wilson and Barry Wotten, both of Oshawa, have been the first to enter the Shelter Valley Folk Festival for each of its past 13 years. They got into line three hours before the opening at 5 p.m. Friday.

Fun was in the air as parents introduced toddlers to the event and long-time attendees greeted one another, some using canes, as they set up chairs in one of the many added shade tents, or in the open air to enjoy the light breeze and sun — and three days of entertainment.

For the first time, refugees and new immigrants were specifically invited to attend and there was even a prayer tent sent up (with Arabic lettering) so Syrian refugees could easily see what it was.

In the food preparation area, there was a wide range of selection from Breadman Garth's Montreal Smoked Meat sandwiches to traditional First Nation's tacos (banoc topped with heritage tomato chill) and tamales with Mexican flare served in cooked corn husks.

An area called, "Creative Experience" was a type of workshop tent where everything from flower crowns to paper mache items were made, as well as activ-



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Kathy Hanshaw of The Tamale Girl in the food area chats with entertainer Quique Escamilla of Toronto (who bicycled to the festival) after serving him tamale cooked in a corn husk.



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Shawn Adler, an Ojibwa First Nations member from Grey County, prepares heritage tomatoes for the chill that will top traditional food known as banal (a sort of flat bread).



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Eve Goldberg (left) of Toronto and Jane Lewis of Guelph, members of Gathering Sparks, entertained on the main stage of the Shelter Valley Folk Festival.



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People in chairs and on blankets started setting up on the hill in front of the main stage where headliner musicians performed throughout the weekend.

ities such as poetry, yoga and dance. The hand-makers market place included a weaver, soap stone

carver, painters and other items where artists showed how they made their wares. And in other white-roofed tents, sustainable

living and wellness displays and information was available. The feeling of community and friendliness is always present at

the festival and was in abundance this year as well. vmacdonald@postmedia.com Twitter.com/NT_vmacdonald