



**For Immediate Release
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The 10th Edition of the Maple Sugar Festival du Sucre d'Érable: A Performance Comparable to the Games!

Whether it was due to the excellent performances and Francophone workshops, or the ideal weather, or to the loyal community attendees and diligent visitors possessed of a sweet tooth, the 10th Maple Sugar Festival du Sucre d'Érable, held in Nanaimo's Beban Park February 19 to 21, delivered a performance worthy of the Games!

Following the opening of an exhibit on Thursday February 18 at the Nanaimo Art Gallery, the Festival opened its doors officially at Beban Park on Friday afternoon and celebrated with fun and humour through to its closing on Sunday afternoon. The Festival benefited from ideal weather conditions throughout the weekend, much to the delight of attendees.

"As the event's organizers, we always hope that each festival will be a greater success than the previous one," states Nicole Langlois, Executive and Artistic Director of L'Association des francophones de Nanaimo (L'AFN). "And, this year, the Games taking place during the same time our Festival was held did not prevent it to shine. The help of many kind folks, the noteworthy performance by Édith Butler, the famous Acadian singer and musician, numerous other fabulous performances, and the exciting and positive atmosphere kept us in 'party mode' all weekend. I believe everything went very well."

During the three days of the Festival, a wealth of talented musicians, dancers, singers, and storytellers performed before thousands of spectators. Traditional French Canadian cuisine was a big hit as long queues of people formed to delight in maple toffy, poutine, stews, and sugar pies complete with of course 100% pure maple syrup.

A vital component of the Maple Sugar Festival du Sucre d'Érable consisted of our 220 volunteers this year. Joanne Hogan, President of L'AFN, attested, "Our Festival's success is due in large part to the many devoted volunteers who return year after year. We are truly appreciative of the support of our community. On behalf of the members and board of directors of L'AFN, I also wish to thank our community partners and our sponsors, who once again generously supported the Festival this year."

"A huge THANK YOU from the bottom of my heart to all who worked, collaborated, and attended from near and far, the ten past editions of the Festival, which has now become the jewel of the Francophone citizens of Greater Nanaimo," states Nicole Langlois.

The 10th Annual Maple Sugar Festival du Sucre d'Érable was made possible thanks to Canadian Heritage, Canadian Maple Delights, BC Gaming Policy & Enforcement Branch, BC Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts and the BC Francophone Affairs Program of Intergovernmental Relations Secretariat, the City of Nanaimo and Quebec's office of Canadian Intergovernmental Relations Secretariat.

To obtain more information about L'Association des francophones de Nanaimo, please dial 250-729-2776 or visit www.francophonenanaimo.org.

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