

Making finance fun is music to the ears

Federal government employee uses his financial acumen to help popular folk festival, local charity

By Donna Brown

Sept. 7, 2006 – Winnipeg, MB – The Winnipeg Folk Festival bills itself as one of the world’s top outdoor musical extravaganzas, attracting more than 45,000 people and pumping over \$14 million into the city’s economy. But nine years ago, the festival was in the red and weighed hiking admission fees to reverse the trend.

Dan Snidal, its volunteer treasurer for four years, considered it a personal challenge to put the popular weekend-long party back on track.

“We didn’t want to raise ticket prices. Instead we found the problems and fixed them one by one. Now the festival has no debt and a surplus of close to half a million dollars.”

Volunteering is a family tradition for Mr. Snidal, a certified management accountant with Western Economic Diversification Canada in Winnipeg. His father, Dr. Dan Snidal, was chair of the United Way of Winnipeg and Mr. Snidal “grew up volunteering.”

The Winnipeg Folk Festival is just one of his causes. He also served nine years on the board of Winnipeg’s Adoption Options, a nonprofit support group that provides adoption information and services. As chair of its finance committee, he helped create a fee structure that covered the organization’s costs while being affordable to adoptive parents.

Making sure everyone has a good time while helping out is an ideal way to inspire volunteers, Dan believes, and colleagues say he brings enjoyment to every task.

Mr. Snidal is one example of Government of Canada employees making a difference in their communities. Along with their regular volunteering, thousands of public servants participate in the annual Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaign (GCWCC), the largest workplace charitable project in Canada. In 2005, federal public servants contributed more than \$29.5 million to GCWCC in 113 communities nation-wide. GCWCC 2006 kicks off on September 7 and will run until November 22.



Dan Snidal made it his personal challenge to fix the Winnipeg Folk Festival’s financial woes, helping to erase its debt and give it a healthy surplus.

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