

Entertainment & Arts

Eclectic new faire coming to Prairieland Park

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Saskatoon Express

An exciting experience for curious and creative people is coming to Saskatoon.

Husband-and-wife duo Kurtis and Valérie Wanner are producing the inaugural Saskatoon Mini Maker Faire, which will be held at Prairieland Park on May 26. The family-friendly festival will feature more than 50 hands-on activities that celebrate technology and engineering projects, arts, crafts and more.

Because interesting projects are often hidden away in garages, basements, barns and makerspaces, the event seeks to bring people's hobbies and experiments out into the open. Attendees are encouraged to join a variety of artists, tinkers, performers, inventors and others for a day of learning and exploring.

"It's very eclectic," said Valérie, who, along with Kurtis, is a graduate of the College of Engineering at the University of Saskatchewan.

Anyone of any age can be a maker, and Saskatoon's first maker faire celebrates the innovation and resourcefulness of the maker movement. The event is locally organized and operated under licence from Maker Media, Inc. The maker faire's origins go back to 2006 in the San Francisco area, where the editors of Make: magazine started the project. Since then, it has grown into a worldwide network of events with the tagline "Maker Faire is the greatest show (and tell) on Earth."

Kurtis and Valérie were inspired by Calgary's maker faire, which they say has evolved over time. They want to see their festival become an annual event in Saskatoon, where makerspace already exists.

"We knew that the maker movement is something that Saskatoon is starting to dip their toes in," said Valérie.

Saskatoon Mini Maker Faire's presenting sponsors include Make: magazine and FingerTech Robotics, which

is Kurtis' local design and manufacturing company that produces custom purpose-built electronics, mechanical parts, hardware and accessories for hobby robotics.

Robotics enthusiasts attending the maker faire will be in luck: the Saskatoon Combat Robotics Club will be at the event with Kilibots Robopalooza 2018, a two-versus-two gladiator-style tournament. Junk Yard Robotics will also be among the dozens of maker faire exhibitors, providing visitors with the opportunity to drive remote control vehicles. As well, the R2D2 Builder's Club will have parts and a fully working droid on hand, while the Western Canadian Robotics Society will hold hands-on sessions enabling people ages 8 and up to build blinking robots.

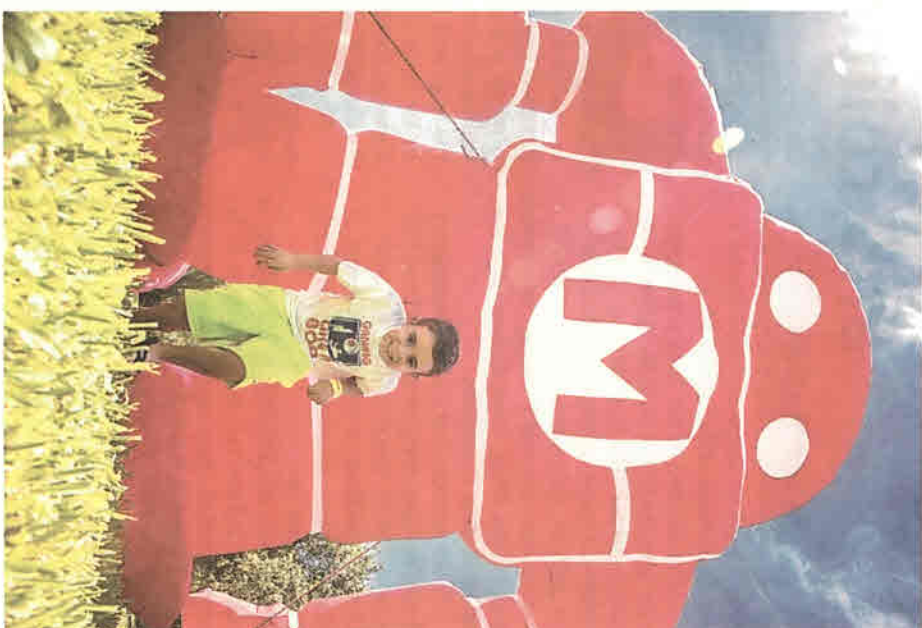
Other topic areas and activities at the Saskatoon Mini Maker Faire include 3D printing, alternative energy, art and design, computers and mobile devices, drones, electric vehicles, electronics, gaming, flying and aeronautics, photography and video, rockets, cardboard fort building, T-shirt silkscreen printing and more.

Craft is another big focus of the event, with the Saskatchewan Craft Council set to present a series of demonstrations and hands-on craft activities throughout the day in partnership with local guilds and craftspeople, such as spinners and weavers, glassworkers, sculptors, woodworkers and others.

"Everyone should be able to try their hands at whatever the exhibit is," said Valérie.

Although the maker faire will have a limited number of vendors selling products, the event is not a pop-up market; rather, the goal of the day is to inspire, inform, connect and grow the local maker community in the spirit of education, involvement and entertainment.

Saskatoon Mini Maker Faire runs from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on May 26 at Prairieland Park Hall C. Early bird tickets are \$12 for adults and \$8 for youth, while tickets



Saskatoon Mini Maker Faire is a family-friendly festival which will feature more than 50 hands-on activities that celebrate technology and engineering projects, arts, crafts and more. (Photo Supplied)

increase to \$15 for adults and \$10 for youth on the day of the event. Children five and under will be admitted for free. For more information about the event, go online to saskatoonmakerfaire.com or follow @YXEMakerFaire on social media.