

# Arts & Entertainment

## Makers to unite at second annual faire

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**S**askatoon Mini Maker Faire is back for another year. Described by organizers as “the greatest show (and tell) on Earth,” the second annual event will take place on Saturday, May 25, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Prairieland Park Hall D.

More than 100 makers, scientists, artists, crafters and engineers will gather to show and share during the high-energy community festival, which will feature workshops, displays, hands-on activity booths and interactive demonstrations for people of all ages.

Some of the activities planned for the daylong family-friendly celebration include operating robots, fabricating cosplay props, creating a video game controller using bananas and Play-Doh, soldering, textile crafts, woodburning, sculpting, live face-casting and learning how to create board games.

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.

Saskatoon Mini Maker Faire is independently organized and produced by The Maker Nucleus Foundation Inc. – a Saskatchewan non-profit organization managed by volunteer artisans, inventors and entrepreneurs – and operates under license from Maker Media, Inc. Tickets to the 2019 Saskatoon Mini Maker Faire can be purchased online from Eventbrite

and also at the door.

The Saskatoon Express asked Valérie Wanner, one of the local event’s producers, about the faire and about maker culture. Here are her responses.

**Express: What is a maker?**

**Wanner:** Makers are a combination of engineers, scientists, hackers, crafters, do-it-yourselfers – someone that does not settle for a ready-packaged solution. It is an artist, a creative person that will apply technology in new and innovative ways to solve a problem – or just for the fun of it. A maker is someone that is willing to get their hands dirty, try stuff out and share their process. Anyone can be a maker – all ages and backgrounds.

**Express: This is the second year for the Saskatoon Mini Maker Faire. How did your inaugural event go in 2018?**

**Wanner:** Last year was very well received by our local maker community, and attendees were delighted by all the hands-on activities available to them. We were personally impressed by the outpouring of support and enthusiasm from local makers, who filled up registration quicker than we had expected. The excitement level of the attendees was very encouraging and we knew we had something special.

**Express: What sort of feedback did you receive about the event?**

**Wanner:** Feedback was extremely positive. A mother of two boys told us she could not get her kids to leave; they were having so much fun making, building, experimenting and learning. From what we heard, it sounds like everyone is eager to



The second Saskatoon Mini Maker Faire will be held on May 25 at Prairieland Park. (Photo Supplied)

return and see what is new for 2019. Some of the popular hands-on activities last year were too crowded, so this year we’ve moved to a larger hall and made sure to give plenty of space to our makers offering workshops.

**Express: Who should attend the Saskatoon Mini Maker Faire?**

**Wanner:** Maker faire is for everyone. As our attendees commented last year, there is really something for everyone in the family. Whether you are on the lookout for new and interesting innovations, families looking for ways to entertain young children during the weekend, or an artist, a creator or simply someone wanting to

browse and find a new hobby, we believe you will enjoy your day at the faire.

**Express: Why do you think it’s important to have an event in the city like this?**

**Wanner:** Because we want Saskatchewan to experience the maker culture – a genuine joy of sharing, generosity and optimism. Different from most trade shows and conventions, maker faires are not focused on selling but rather (on) engaging attendees and providing memorable experiences. We want to bring together and strengthen the province’s network of makers while offering a real-life platform to share their creations with the community.