

More than 20,000 converge on Davenport pub for biggest St. Pat's festival in Iowa

Written by Print Junky

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Kelly's hosts 20,000 for what it claims is the biggest St. Patrick's Day festival in Iowa.

DAVENPORT, IOWA — Kelly's Irish Pub and Eatery, located at 2222 E. 53rd St., Davenport, IA, is calling its eighth annual St. Patrick's Day Festival a rousing success, and its biggest to date.

The weather was the story of the day, as record warm temperatures made for a beautiful St. Pat's party, and brought thousands to the big tent on 53rd Street both Friday and Saturday.

Kelly's owner, Dan Kelly, noted that Kelly's St. Patrick's Day Festival brings so many people together, that connections are made and reinforced. "This was our biggest year ever. It was a great day to see so many people out celebrating Irish heritage. Everyone was laughing and having fun enjoying their old friends and making new ones."

Friday's concert, featuring CMT's The Singing Beestar Beau Davidson was a great success and a fitting kickoff to a celebratory weekend.

Saturday, with Irish Dancers making multiple stops, and their roving bagpiper keeping the crowd in the spirit, Kelly's poured more than 2,000 gallons of green beer, and served more than a ton - approximately 9,000 servings - of corned beef. As an airborne accent to the festivities, the Skydiving Leprechauns flew in just before sunset Saturday to cheers, amid live music that lasted for more than 10 hours.

New features this year, included games of skill and strength, and NCAA TVs in the west tent, and the raised VIP area in the main tent, all of which went over well with the crowd.

And once again, Kelly's made sure anyone that needed a ride home got one. "Our free shuttles got many people home safe and sound, capping a record day from beginning to end, from temperatures, to attendance." Kelly said.

7 Davenport Police officers provided event security, which went extremely smoothly considering the numbers, with no major incidents and only one arrest.

For an event this size, sponsors have become critical, according to Kelly. "Companies such as Wieblers' Harley Davidson, the River Cities' Reader, Active Endeavors, Barron Equipment, Ganzos, Knilians Furniture, Mississippi River Distilling Co., Per Mar, Wolfe Beverage, QC Safety, Radon Solutions, Vintage Homes, Steeplegate Inn, and Wayne Montgomery Floor Coverings help keep Saturday's admission free for this annual celebration, and we hope they get value from being seen at, and being involved with this annual event."

"It makes sense that everyone says: 'Kelly's ISPatrick's Day!'"

About Kelly's: Opened in 2004, Kelly's has always been proud of its tradition of great food and great service by a friendly staff in a comfortable atmosphere. With a diverse menu ranging from burgers and pub food to salmon and salads, fried items are hand battered and breaded to

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order, queso dip and soups are made from scratch, in-house. With 12 flat-screen TV's and a 106-inch big screen, this Irish pub is perfect for watching all the sports action in a family-friendly atmosphere.

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