

# Survey reveals some interesting facts about Blues festival attendees

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Main Street Helena was curious about the fans that attended the annual Arkansas Blues & Heritage Festival and initiated an unofficial but informative survey to 323 people that shopped in stores along Cherry Street during this year's festival.

Tim Schuringa, senior community development officer for Southern Bancorp Capital Partners and MSH member, shared some of the data gathered and the potential of such information.

"We can look at the information from an age standpoint for sponsors. Like who they are and where they

are from and identify what age groups are under represented," said Schuringa.

Schuringa says that some information may have been gathered from past festivals but on a limited level.

"The final analysis may help with marketing the festival in the future," he said.

"It helps if we know that the festival needs to attract the 30-something population with families," he continued.

Of the 323 participants, 30 percent indicated that they had attended 11 or more years of festivals.

"That's a good loyal group," remarked Schuringa.

Approximately 20 percent indicated that they were 6-10 year veterans, another 20 percent indicated that they

attended 3-5 years, 10 percent indicated they had attended 1-2 years and the remaining 20 percent indicated that the 24th AB&HF was a first-time experience.

Those that participated in the survey indicated they were blues fans to the core, attending festivals around the world.

More than 20 music festivals were listed including those across the river in Clarksdale, Miss., the United Kingdom, Netherlands and Austria.

The participants hailed from 32 states.

"And that's just of the respondents," said Schuringa.

"I thought it was interesting that 128 respondents were from Arkansas," he

said.

While 128 were from within the state, other states and countries were also represented and include, 11 from Calif., eight from La., 14 from Mo., 13 from Miss., 37 from Tenn., 12 from Texas and 18 left their origins blank.

The age groups were also interesting. The survey reflected that 155 ranged in ages of 45-64, 111 chose not to respond, two were under 18 and 35 were 25-44 years of age.

MSH plans to hold a drawing to win an official AB&HF T-shirt.

"We feel like the festival turned a corner this year. I think the 25th anniversary festival will be a big one," said Schuringa.