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Home County Folk League Receives a \$30,000

'Celebrate Ontario' Tourism Funding Grant

London, ONTARIO – Home County Folk League announces the receipt of a \$30,000 grant from the Ontario Ministry of Tourism Celebrate Ontario program. Awarded a second year in a row, this grant supports the Home County Folk Festival scheduled for July 16-18, 2010 in Victoria Park, London, Ontario.

“In its 37th year, the Home County Folk Festival helps boost tourism, attracts new audiences and increases visitor spending. With an estimated impact of \$8.1 million on the economy, last year viewed tourists visiting the festival increase to 20% in the Park at to 30% at the Late Night Venues.”, states Victoria Bright, Marketing and Development Manager of the Home County Folk Festival. “The partnership with Ontario Tourism boosts the economic activity for local businesses and other tourism related sites, but also tremendously supports the growth of the festival”.

For 2010, the funding will be used to expand and enhance the children’s area in Victoria Park in order to attract more families to this all Canadian festival. With an interactive theme, “Explore Your Roots 2010”, the enhancements include professional high profile performances for children, folk arts and crafts activities, a full traditional Canadian Pow-Wow, and historical folk re-enactments with the participation of Fanshawe Pioneer Village. There will be one-hour introductory interactive workshops throughout the weekend for children to explore, including instrument building & the science of sound, pottery lessons, traditional step dancing, world drumming techniques, and song-writing. Running concurrently with the regular festival programming, participants will be able to pre-register for these interactive workshops. This funding is also assisting with the expansion of the festival outside of Victoria Park into Centennial Hall on Saturday July 17th with dance performances and high profile children’s entertainers. There will also be a “Walking Home County Passport Tour” to arts and heritage locations in downtown London displaying folk based art and music.

Artistic Director Catherine McInnes says “Home County has always been a family oriented festival. Creating opportunities for children to actively participate in various genres and to be inspired by folk music, art and Canadian heritage, is an exciting way to sustain and develop Canadian culture. Children are Canada’s future artists and festival audience base.”

For the past thirty-seven years, the Home County Folk League, a London-based non-profit volunteer driven organization, has presented great Canadian roots artists. Home County has won Festival and Events Ontario Top 100 designation and was recently on the Top 20 Best Music Festivals in Canada list established by CBC Radio3’s Searchlight Contest. With music performances on six stages in Victoria Park and over 150 juried Canadian crafters and artisans, the park comes alive in a vibrant celebration of Canadian music and art.

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