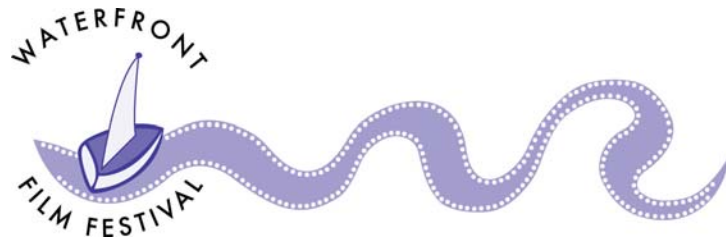


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Waterfront Film Festival lured back to South Haven

16th annual independent film festival to be held June 12-15

South Haven, Michigan, Oct. 23, 2013 – Following an outpouring of community support and a successful inaugural year in South Haven, Waterfront Film Festival organizers are announcing the Festival will return in 2014 to the beachfront town for a 16th year of independent film on the waterfront.

Nearly 90 documentaries, dramas, comedies and film shorts showed on seven screens throughout the four days in South Haven. A record number of filmmakers were in town to talk about their films before and after the screenings, and many actors and filmmakers participated on Q&A panels.

Festival organizers have been approached by many new sponsors and volunteers who are committed to helping with Waterfront Film Festival's second year in South Haven.

"Through a partnership of financial donors, the City government, the South Haven Center for the Arts, CVB and Chamber, Waterfront Film Festival will expand to be bigger and better in 2014," festival Co-founder Hopwood DePree said.

A local philanthropist stepped forward with a significant financial commitment to underwrite the hiring of a Director of Development who will focus on fundraising and handle day-to-day, year-round operations of putting the festival together.

"This has been one of our goals since the beginning. It is wonderful to finally be at this point. Having a full-time staff member dedicated to development is a crucial step in taking the Waterfront Film Festival to new heights and to achieve long-term success for the non-profit organization," DePree said.

Organizers say the long-term goal for the festival's growth is to encompass more of the West Michigan region, eventually hosting screenings up and down the lakeshore.

Waterfront Film Festival Co-founder Dori DePree commended the South Haven community for its enthusiastic response to the festival and continued support.

“We are thrilled with the support of the residents, city officials and the mayor,” she said. “Mayor Bob Burr was instrumental in bringing the festival to South Haven, and his enthusiasm to inject more art into the community is inspiring.”

Film submissions for the 2014 festival will be accepted beginning Nov. 1.

Visit www.waterfrontfilm.org for more information on film submission guidelines, the job posting, and how to become a sponsor or volunteer for 2014.

About Waterfront Film Festival

Now in its 16th year, Waterfront Film Festival celebrates independent film and filmmakers in a non-competitive environment. Located along the Michigan lakeshore, WFF is one of the leading destination film festivals in the Midwest, regularly hosting Midwest premieres of Academy Award-winning and nominated documentaries. Recognized as a top five film festival, WFF is a non-profit event committed to creating a “middle coast” venue for independent filmmakers while further enhancing the cultural draw of West Michigan. For more information on the coming festival June 12-15 in South Haven, Mich., visit www.waterfrontfilm.org, “like” us on Facebook at facebook.com/WaterfrontFilm and follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/#!/WaterfrontFilm.