

February 5, 2004

Each year as I retire my embattled wall calendar and put in its place a crisp new chart, I see my first reminder, penned just under January: "Get Going On Waterfront!" As the Media Relations Coordinator for the Waterfront Film Festival, my goal this year is to see our 6th Annual festival featured in five additional regional or national publications. So here's my pitch.

The Waterfront Film Festival is like nothing you've ever seen before! It is:

Non-competitive. After several years on the festival circuit with their own films, WFF founders envisioned something different – a place where filmmakers are freed from the hectic pace and culture of self-promotion. At Waterfront, filmmakers can instead spend their time watching films, networking with industry professionals, interacting with audiences, and experiencing one of the most beautiful areas of the country through festival-sponsored excursions.

A Middle Coast Venue. Another goal of The Waterfront Film Festival is to provide Midwest audiences with the opportunity to see films they may not otherwise get a chance to see. Art and independent films have previously skipped over the center states, but our attendance figures prove that our region is full of film-buffs and curious locals seeking to expand their horizons. After five years, we have developed a loyal following while continuing to reach out to new audiences - exposing them to the honesty, variety, and raw talent that only independent film can provide.

In A Unique Lakeshore Location. The summer resort town of Saugatuck, Michigan is continually recognized in the national press for its natural beauty and commitment to the arts. Known as the "Art Coast of Michigan", Saugatuck provides the perfect backdrop for our festival. And the fact that this small Lake Michigan beachtown has no theaters is no deterrent – films are screened in various alternate venues including a marina, a former pie factory renovated for use as an Arts Center, and the local VFW hall. Saugatuck is also one of the few places where you can park your car on Thursday night and not need it again all weekend: All WFF screenings, seminars, and functions are within walking distance as are numerous B&Bs, restaurants, shops and bars. WFF was named one of "Ten Fantastic Film Festival Vacations" by Film Threat (www.filmthreat.com).

A 100% Volunteer-run Organization. WFF is a non-profit organization and is run completely by volunteers who are passionate about film, arts, travel or just want to be involved in West Michigan's most exciting event. Many of our volunteers have been with WFF since the first organizational meeting six years ago, while others travel hundreds of miles just to be a part of the fun.

But don't just take my word for it. Join us June 10-13, 2004 and see for yourself. Or take a look at the information I've included: press clips, a copy of the 2003 festival guide, and the current Saugatuck/Douglas area visitors guide. For additional information, to schedule an interview, or for media credentials, simply email me at media@waterfrontfilm.com. 2004 will prove to be our best year yet!

Cheers!

Melanie Scholten, Media Relations Coordinator

The PRESS Loves Us!

The Waterfront Film Festival has always enjoyed great coverage from local print and television media outlets including:

- *The Holland Sentinel*
- *The Grand Rapids Press and Lakeshore Press*
- *The Kalamazoo Gazette*
- *The Muskegon Chronicle*
- *In Magazine*
- *Grand Rapids Magazine*
- *On-the-town Magazine*
- WXMI
- WZZM
- WOTV
- WOOD

And over the years our press coverage has grown:

- WXMI, the Grand Rapids FOX affiliate, has been our media sponsor for two years and we are so excited to be able to continue that relationship. In addition to nearly continuous pre-promotion of the event, local anchors shoot several live segments from the festival each year.
- *The Chicago Tribune* named WFF the “Highlight of the Week” in June 2003.
- *The Chicago Sun-Times* named WFF one of “10 really cool things to do...” in June 2003.
- *Yahoo! Movies* featured The Waterfront Film Festival in June 2003.
- *Lake Magazine* features have highlighted different aspects of the festival each year accompanied by energetic photographs of WFF functions.
- The *Kalamazoo Gazette* pull-out entertainment guide in June 2003 featured WFF cover art and a four-page spread in addition to their regular pre-promotion.