

MEDIA RELEASE

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MATCHING DONATION HELPS KEEP FESTIVAL AFLOAT

Prince Edward County, ON, (June 22, 2009): Things are looking up for Festival Players' third season. Hot on the heels of an anonymous \$20 000 donation, Artistic Director Sarah Phillips received word that the McLean Smits Family Foundation was going to match that contribution.

"These donations are fantastic news for the Festival. We've seen a steady flow of responses to our recent request for support. To know that the grassroots support is there is very heartening," says Phillips. "Hopefully those amounts will continue to flow and we'll manage to secure at least one other matching \$20,000 donation. We're not out of the woods yet but if that happens in the very near future, we'll definitely be moving forward with the season. My fingers are crossed and then some."

For their part, the McLean Smits Family Foundation is hopeful the donation will help drive others to support the theatre company. "We're happy to support Festival Players of Prince Edward County. Festival Players is an important part of making the County a wonderful place to live and visit," say Foundation heads Sonja Smits and Seaton McLean. Smits is one of Canada's best known actors and her husband, Seaton McLean, was one of the founders of Alliance Atlantis Communications. Both are proud proprietors of Closson Chase Vineyards in Hillier.

Even with the recent boost to their coffers, the Festival may still experience a financial shortfall. The Artistic Director will continue to seek matching funds from potential donors as the clock clicks down to Opening Night. The first show of the season, *Ship of Fire*, has entered its second week of rehearsals, and the *Schoolhouse* cast arrives next week.

More information about the theatre company, and how to donate, can be found by visiting their website www.festivalplayers.ca or calling 613.399.5677.

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