

**Comedy festival announcement**

**Tuesday, February 6**

**[AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY]**

Good afternoon everyone. It is a pleasure to be with you here for the official announcement of this new and exciting festival.

I want to credit Tourism Sault Ste. Marie for coming up with this idea. The type of creative thinking behind the planning of this festival is necessary to bring fresh, entertaining concepts new to our city.

On that note, I'd like to take a moment to recognize Tourism Sault Ste. Marie executive director Ian McMillan, the executive producer of the festival Tim Progosh and the members of the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie team in attendance today. Thank you for your contributions and moving forward I know this festival is in good hands.

Festivals and events represent an important segment of our local tourism industry.

A popular attraction draws visitors to our city, yielding a financial boost for local businesses, such as restaurants and hotels.

Beyond the benefits for our business community, events and festivals contribute to the quality of life of our residents by providing unique activities and entertainment options, spreading awareness of diverse cultures and identities, along with serving as a source of community pride. An event going on right now is a prime example of this.

Bon Soo has become synonymous with winter in Sault Ste. Marie, and this new festival will further bolster our city's entertainment landscape.

By offering comedy in a variety of different forms, our local tourism experts have created a unique three-day festival which should attract visitors to our city, while also providing local residents with a new entertainment option.

I encourage the community to support this offering and I remind people to head online to the Essar Centre's website to buy tickets.

Thank you.