

■ **CELEBRATING THE ARTS:** The emphasis is on free events

Culture Days coming

Beacon Herald staff

Stratford and Perth County will join communities across the country this fall in two days of celebrating the arts and culture, dubbed Culture Days.

As Anika Gaffney of the Stratford Shakespeare Festival notes in a media release, in this area "every day is a 'culture day' thanks to the remarkable resources that enrich our community," but on Sept. 25-26 the area will be part of a mass celebration and recognition of the role arts and culture play in keeping our communities vibrant and full of life.

Any organization, group or individual involved in creating and promoting cultural activities is invited to participate by offering access to their work, with a focus on free events.

The Festival is planning several special events, including a Peter Pan picnic on Sunday, Sept. 26. Other events taking place at the same time include the annual culinary festival Savour Stratford, the annual Stratford Fall Fair,

demonstrations at Factory163, a "human library" at the Stratford Public Library and exhibitions at Gallery Stratford and the Stratford-Perth Museum, in addition to the full slate of plays on offer at the Festival.

Conceived as the cultural equivalent of Hockey Day in Canada, this national initiative was headed by Antoni Cinolino, general director of the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, as a nationwide volunteer movement "to raise the awareness, accessibility, participation and engagement of all Canadians in the arts and cultural life of their communities," as noted on the Culture Days website.

At this point, Stratford organizers are asking those who would like to participate in Culture Days to register now to help with marketing the weekend's activities. Those interested are asked to register by July 15 so that information can be used in promotional materials. Events may be registered at www.culturedays.ca.