

June 20, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CITY OF WELLAND RAISES THE FRANCO-ONTARIO FLAG

Welland, ON – La Saint Jean Baptiste, held annually on June 24, is the feast day of St. John the Baptist. It is a day marked with festivities throughout French-speaking communities of Canada, and an official holiday in the province of Quebec. Welland's Francophone community will celebrate La Saint Jean Baptiste at L'Auberge Richelieu on Saturday June 21, beginning with a traditional breakfast and activities that will last throughout the day.

To commemorate this cherished holiday for Franco-Ontarians, City of Welland Dignitaries and representatives from the Centre D'Emploi et de ressources Francophones (CERF Niagara) will raise the Franco-Ontario flag at its permanent place of honour. A new flagpole was recently installed at Welland Civic Square, in order to allow the Franco-Ontario flag to fly on a permanent basis, and promote the City of Welland's proud Francophone history.

Welland City Councillor, Rocky Letourneau, is a strong supporter of having the Franco-Ontarian Flag fly permanently at Civic Square. "Since we have been recognized as an official bilingual community, it's wonderful to show this recognition by having a permanent flagpole and Franco-Ontario flag at various locations, just as other bilingual cities do," said Letourneau. "I am personally very proud that council supported this initiative when it was brought forward during the budget deliberations," he added.

Centre De Santé Communautaire, located at 810 East Main Street and home to CERF Niagara, also displays the Ontario Francophone flag permanently. Lucie Huot, Executive Director of CERF Niagara, encourages the Francophone community to attend the flag raising ceremony and celebrate the diversity of Welland. "As a community we should feel very proud to raise this flag because it's a symbol of our shared history, diversity, and continuous presence going forward. Everyone is welcome to attend the ceremony," said Huot. The flag raising ceremony takes place on June 24, 3:00 P.M. at Welland Civic Square.

-30-