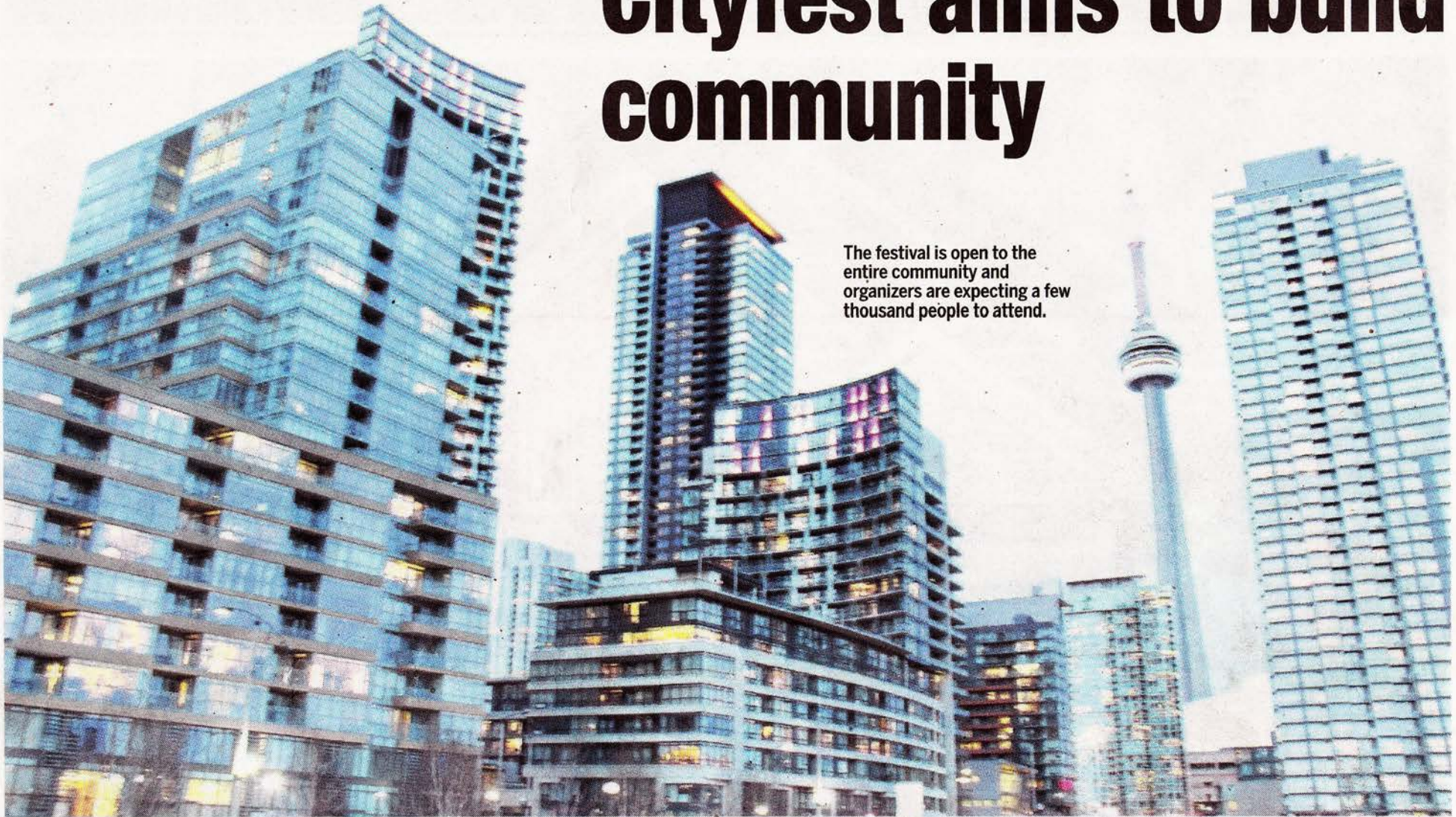


SPECIAL EVENTS

Cityfest aims to build community



The festival is open to the entire community and organizers are expecting a few thousand people to attend.

DUNCAN MCALLISTER
Special to QMI Agency

A huge bonus of living the downtown condo life is having access to so many world-class events throughout the year. Toronto's newest festival is celebrating its first year in the downtown core, and with seven months in the planning, the organizers hope it will be a popular yearly occurrence.

On Saturday, August 17th, Cityfest will bring thousands of residents and visitors together to celebrate community talent, highlight the work of Toronto artists, and enjoy live music and a variety of food and drinks in the vibrant Concord CityPlace neighbourhood.

Organizer Tiberiu Scriciu says the event has been organized entirely by community volunteers. "We've been working on Cityfest since late December of last year with over 20 dedicated volunteers. It's been a very



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busy past couple of months but we have made a lot of progress," he says. "We're expecting an additional 40 to help out the day of the festival."

What's unique is the social aspect of CityPlace: each condo has their own social committee and planning groups to engage and connect the residents, offering everything from Zumba classes to a farmers' market.

Cityfest volunteers put out the word for talent and have assembled quite a lineup of talent with so much packed

into a single afternoon. "We have 12 artists participating, including Juno-nominated headliner Karl Wolf, and up-and-coming artists like iSH and Zolo," says Scriciu.

Part of the program is dedicated to showcasing local talent. "The team that's been working on that essentially just reached out to a number of Canadian artists and we asked them if they wanted to participate. So we got a great response from a lot of them. They thought it was a great initiative to support."

Cityfest organizers have



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also managed to line up some impressive corporate sponsors. "We have over 20 sponsors who have made Cityfest possible." Molson Coors will be hosting a beer garden, Sobeys will set up a barbecue and the Raptors, Toronto FC, Porter Airlines and Z103.5 will be giving away goodies at the event.

Smoke's Poutinerie will be the exclusive food truck at the festival. "We know that they serve amazing poutines and their food will be a great addition to the festival food offerings," says Scriciu.

CityPlace Got Talent turned out to be a greater success than was anticipated, with over 30 high-quality contestants performing everything from singing and dancing, to comedy. "We allowed the public to vote on their favourites and we will have six finalists perform live at Cityfest," says Scriciu. "It's a great example of an event being organized by local residents, which is what we did to really connect with our neighbors and have them take part of this free festival."

The festival's sounds and

grooves will appeal to the young and hip residents of downtown Toronto. Cityfest is planned to be a family-friendly festival as well. "At CityPlace, we've had a lot of families and young children move into the downtown core so it's quite a healthy mix of residents in the area now," explains Scriciu. The festival is open to the entire community and organizers are expecting a few thousand people to attend from this ever-growing neighbourhood that now includes over 11,000 residents. "In the earlier part of the day, it's designed to cater to all ages and be fun for everybody to enjoy. It becomes more of a party atmosphere later in the evening."

Cityfest takes place at the Canoe Landing Park on August 17 from 1 to 9 p.m. and admission is free. For more information, please visit www.cityfest.ca, the Cityfest Facebook page, CityFestToronto or follow the Twitter handle, @CityfestToronto.