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Media Contact:

Brooke Smith, (212) 627-3439

Brooke@vppublicrelations.com

VAIL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 2007 AWARD WINNERS IN SELECT FILM CATEGORIES & SCREENPLAY COMPETITION

- Harold Ramis, Sophia Bush and Hayden Panettiere Honored -

VAIL, Colo., April 5, 2006 – **The Vail Film Festival**, along with presenting sponsor *Best Life* magazine, presented eight awards at this past weekend's awards ceremony in beautiful Vail, Colorado. The Festival, which just completed its fourth year, screened 63 films from around the world, including 12 feature films and 51 documentaries, short films, Oscar shorts, action sports, and student films.

"This year's festival showcased an incredible line-up of films to record-breaking crowds," said Scott Cross, founder and co-director of the Vail Film Festival. "We are extremely proud of the 2007 festival, which was an exciting compilation of film, music, industry panels, and special events."

The **2007 Gold Summit Award** for contribution to film was presented to **Harold Ramis**, whose films include some of the most popular and influential comedies of our time -- *Animal House*, *Caddyshack*, *Stripes*, *National Lampoon's Vacation*, *Ghostbusters*, *Back to School*, *Groundhog Day*, *Multiplicity*, *Analyze This*, *Bedazzled*, *Analyze That*, and his most recent directorial effort, *The Ice Harvest*, starring John Cusack and Billy Bob Thornton. Having received his BA from Washington University in St. Louis, Ramis has been awarded honorary Doctorates in Arts from both Columbia College Chicago and Washington University. Among his numerous professional honors and awards, Ramis is the recipient of the American Comedy Award, the British Comedy Award, and the BAFTA (British Academy) award for screenwriting (*Groundhog Day*). Four of his films were listed among the American Film Institutes' "100 Funniest Movies," and *the Writers Guild of America* recently chose *Groundhog Day* as one of the "101 Greatest Screenplays."

The Festival honored **Sophia Bush** with its **2007 Rising Star Award**. This past year, Bush starred in three feature films, while portraying Brooke Davis on The CW's hit drama *One Tree Hill*. Most recently, she starred opposite Sean Bean in the remake of the classic horror film *The Hitcher*, produced by Michael Bay for Focus Features. In July 2006, Bush starred in the 20th Century Fox comedy *John Tucker Must Die*, co-starring Jesse Metcalfe and Brittany Snow. She also starred in Buena Vista Pictures' thriller, *Stay Alive*, opposite Frankie Muniz and Adam Goldberg. Bush's first movie role was in the comedy *Van Wilder* with Ryan Reynolds. Bush also appeared in HBO's *Point of Origin* with Ray Liotta and John Leguizamo and the independent film *Learning Curves*. She was featured in a three-episode arc on the provocative FX drama, *Nip/Tuck*.

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The 2007 Festival also honored **Hayden Panettiere** with the **Breakthrough Actor of the Year** award. Currently starring in the NBC Television drama *Heroes*, Panettiere has been cast in the unique and challenging role as a high school cheerleader who is literally indestructible. The new NBC series is already a qualified critical and audience hit. She recently shot two independent films, *The Architect* for HDNet opposite Anthony LaPaglia and Isabella Rosselini and *Mr. Gibb* for Kevin Spacey's company Trigger Street co-starring Bill Sadler and Tim Daly.

2007 Film Awards:

Feature Films in competition included *Crime Fiction*, *Murder Party*, *Military Intelligence and You*, *Sinner*, and *Daydreamer*. The award for **Best Feature Film** was given to *Murder Party*, directed by Jeremy Saulnier. A random Halloween invitation leads a lonesome man into the hands of a rogue collective intent on murdering him for the sake of their art, sparking a bloodbath of mishap, mayhem and hilarity. Starring: Chris Sharp, Macon Blair, Sandy Barnett, Paul Goldblatt, Stacy Rock, Bill Lacey, Skei Saulnier, Bill Tnagradi.

The **Best Documentary Award** was presented to *When Adnan Comes Home*, directed by Andrew Berends. The documentary follows an Iraqi boy who risks his life and freedom for a couple dollars worth of scrap metal...and loses. *When Adnan Comes Home* presents life in occupied Iraq exclusively from the Iraqi perspective.

The **Best Short Award** was presented to *The Knife Grinder's Tale*, directed by R.L. Hooker, which tells the tragic story of a father's journey struggling to understand why his son was senselessly murdered in the slums of Nairobi.

The **Best Action Sport Award** was presented to *Shelter from the Storm*, directed by Roman Gackowski. *Shelter from the Storm* chronicles the journey of Hilary O'Neil, Kasha Rigby, Megan Oster and Ingrid Beckstrom as they attempt to ski to the remote Baffin Island. They will battle the ultimate test of survival in harsh conditions, to help the residents living in overcrowded, outdated housing.

The award for **Best Student Film** was presented to *Somewhere in the City*, directed by Ramsey Denison. The film follows former drug addict Toby Cray, who has straightened out his life, but finds straightening out other people's lives is impossible. His efforts to help the homeless have all been unsuccessful and he's about to give up, when he meets Gabe, an odd, but determined drifter who needs a chance. Will Toby give him one, or have years of failure brought him to a point where he no longer has the heart to help.

Best Life Publisher Michael Wolfe and Vice President, and Editor in Chief Stephen Perrine, who served as a member of the Feature Film Jury, presented the 2007 Audience Choice Award to DB Sweeney for *Two Tickets to Paradise*. *Two Tickets to Paradise* takes a road trip with life-long buddies Mark, McGriff and Jason who, although life hasn't turned out the way they once dreamed, are managing to stay above water in their small Pennsylvania hometown. Mark, whose fleeting college football glory has morphed into a dangerous obsession with gambling, McGriff, the beer truck driver who has never let go of his rock-n-roll aspirations, and Jason the high school Valedictorian working as a clerk in an office supply store. After the death of Mark's Dad and McGriff's discovery of his wife's infidelity, the guys embark on a cross-country road trip to a football game, boozing and misbehaving every step of the way. They finally discover what is really important: in this crazy, uncertain world, the one thing we can count on is our friends. Starring: John C. McGinley, Paul Hipp, and DB Sweeney.

Screenplay Awards:

The **Best Feature Length Screenplay** was presented to *With Kind Regards from Kindergarten* by Adam Kline. Terrified of her first day of Kindergarten, Madeline hides in her room. So her grandmother undertakes to disclose the tale that is the secret of kindergarten – a tale some ninety years in the making. It is not, in fact, a German word meaning 'children's garden.' In fact, it is the name of a very special man: Karlheinz Indergarten, or K. Indergarten, a clockmaker of rather unique talents.

The **Best Short Length Screenplay** was presented to *Shylock 35* by Jeffrey Rubin. In the early Nazi era, an actor in a German production of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* is pressured to render Shylock as an anti-Semitic caricature devoid of humanity. Things come to a crisis when director cuts Shylock's great 'If you prick us, do we not bleed?' speech because it makes him too sympathetic.

About the Jury:

The **2007 Feature Film Competition Jury** was comprised of Stephen Perrine, Vice President, and Editor in Chief of *Best Life* magazine; Adam Kassen, Co-President of Trigger Street Independent; Brian Brooks, Managing Editor at indieWIRE; Dana O'Keefe of Cinetic Media; and award-winning actor Giancarlo Esposito.

The **2007 Documentary Competition Jury** members included Tiffany Bartok, Hunter Weeks and Deborah Rosenberg.

The **2007 Shorts and Student Film Jurors** include Chip Bolcilk, Tom Isbell, Sam Reich, Lorri Lindberg and Barry Bell.

The **2007 Screenplay Competition Jurors** include Brian Doubleday, Gary Jonas, Mark Stanfield, Robert Gosnell, Craig Volk and Cheryl Whitney

About Vail Film Festival

The Vail Film Festival promotes independent filmmaking, with a special focus on new and innovative filmmakers. Besides screening some of the year's top films from around the globe, the festival also featured workshops, seminars, industry panel discussions and special events with award-winning actors, writers and directors. A special awards ceremony, family festivities, ski and snowboarding events, VIP parties and live music rounded out this four-day event. The Vail Film Festival was produced by the Vail Film Institute, a non-profit arts organization that is dedicated to fostering independent cinema and creative filmmaking. Festival passes incorporate a combination of movies, filmmaker panels, galas and music, with deep discounts on skiing for festival passholders. For additional information, visit www.vailfilmfestival.org.

About Best Life (www.bestlifeonline.com)

Best Life is the fastest -growing men's magazine in the country*. Published by Rodale, Inc., it offers hands-on advice about health, fitness, family, personal style, and financial security for affluent, accomplished men. Through stunning photography, exceptional writing from noted authors, and compelling service journalism, *Best Life* shows men how to spend their most precious resources – time and money – to live life to the fullest. The magazine reaches two million readers and is published 10 times a year. * Source ABC 2005

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Editors Note: Logo and hi-res images available at www.vailfilmfestival.org/extranets/press. Please contact Brooke Smith at 212.627.3439 for login information.