



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Schooners Coming to Fells Point before Racing to Save the Bay in the 21st Annual Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race

Baltimore, MD – Forty-five schooners are participating in the 21st Annual Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race (GCBSR) this October. The schooner fleet will once again be **racing to save the Bay, promoting awareness of the Bay's maritime heritage and encouraging the preservation and improvement of its natural resources.** The schooners will begin arriving in Fells Point during the week of October 10 to participate in pre-race festivities before the start of the race on October 14.

For landlubbers, race week begins with two events to which the public is invited...

On Tuesday, October 12 at 6:30 p.m., Schooners & Crooners, a free outdoor concert on Broadway Square in Fells Point will feature Schoonertime, Inishowen, Letter of Marque and Tom Lewis.

Schoonertime (www.schoonertime.com), the bluegrass band from the schooner *Martha White*, will be sailing to Baltimore from their home port of Chestertown, Maryland. Captain Bob Kay, First Mate Cherri Reese, Bob Hamlet and Elaine "The Boss" Hamlet combine their love of bluegrass music and sailing on old wooden ships. When they sail, they go on "Schooner Time" - when the wind, rain, tide and the many breakdowns allow. The only thing fast on "Schoonertime" is bluegrass music!

Inishowen (www.facebook.com/pages/Inishowen/88325814362), hailing from York, Pennsylvania, is the husband and wife team of Henry Cohen and Lynn Colgan Cohen, along with their good friends Ron Peters and Eileen Bozarth. They are known for proficiency, versatility in their music and great rapport with their audiences. Inishowen's repertoire is drawn primarily from the rich musical heritage of the seafaring nations — especially Britain, Scotland, Ireland, Canada and the United States.

Letter of Marque (www.letterofmarque.org) is a group of friends from the Baltimore-DC area who share a passion for maritime history and the music that comes out of that heritage. They celebrate the diversity of maritime music, from traditional chanties and forebitters, to more modern maritime songs. Their repertoire is also pulled from maritime traditions in ports both far and near — the British and American Navies; Irish and Scottish folk tunes; Canadian, Great Lakes, Erie Canal and Mississippi River watermen; and the Chesapeake Bay.

Tom Lewis (www.tomlewis.net), “widely acknowledged as North America's finest exponent of contemporary nautical songs” (Canadian Society for Traditional Music), brings to the stage wry humor, button accordion, ukulele, a great voice and his unique experience of more than 40 years bridging the sea-going and folk-singing communities. His repertoire — from traditional shanties to songs fashioned out of his own seafaring background — recruits his audience for a voyage by turns reflective, dramatic and humorous. Now resident in Canada's Rocky Mountains, Tom was born in Northern Ireland and that Celtic heritage is obvious in his clear, strong voice, evoking quiet sorrow for a fisherman lost to the sea just as honestly as it powers out a shanty "to be heard above the gales". With songs that have become folk standards, known and sung wherever great choruses ring out, Tom accompanies himself on button accordion and ukulele, but it's his powerful vocal style and infectious humor — that quality of entertaining — which keeps audiences coming back again and again.

The public is encouraged to come to Fells Point early and take a stroll along the waterfront to see the schooners that have arrived before enjoying the concert.

Some of the schooners will be open for public tours on **Wednesday, October 13**, before setting sail at **5 p.m. for the Parade of Sail from Fells Point to the Inner Harbor**. The public is invited to view the schooners from the Fells Point and Inner Harbor shorelines.

All of the schooners will cast off lines early on Thursday, October 14 to proceed to the starting line for the 21st Annual Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race near Annapolis. They'll be off at the firing of the start gun at 1:30 p.m. and finish 127 nautical miles further south at Thimble Shoal off Hampton, Virginia. They will then proceed to Portsmouth, Virginia, for the awards ceremony on the 16th.

The proceeds of the race are used to support preservation of the Bay through youth education programs. To date, the race has donated \$137,624 to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, providing thousands of children with on-water educational experiences.

The Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race originated as a personal challenge between Captain Lane Briggs' "Tugantine" *Norfolk Rebel* and the *Pride of Baltimore II*. Captain Briggs' commitment to the maritime heritage of the Chesapeake and his love of schooner-rigged sailboats led him to found the race and has kept the race going strong for 21 years. As we celebrate the 21st annual race, it is important that we remember the legacy that Captain Lane Briggs (1932-2005) bestowed on all of us.

For more information, contact Paul or Pat Brabazon, Maryland Race Chairs (maryland@schoonerrace.org), or Denise Muncher, Virginia Race Chair (virginia@schoonerrace.org), or visit the GCBSR website at www.schoonerrace.org.

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