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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WHIDBEY ISLAND RACE WEEK REGATTA ANNOUNCES NEW PLANS FOR 2015

Seattle, Washington: Whidbey Island Race Week, the premier sailboat-racing regatta in the Pacific Northwest announces new developments for the event happening July 19-24, 2015 in Oak Harbor on Whidbey Island, Washington.

New for 2015 / Kids Camp

Whidbey Island Race Week will offer a Kids Camp to run adjacent to the sailboat racing Monday, July 20 to Friday, July 24, 2015 from 10 am to 6 pm. The camp will be offered to kids ages 5-12 and will be operated from the new Kids Zone area in the post-race event space at the Oak Harbor Yacht Club.

Kids Camp will include sailing instruction by certified instructors, island outings, games, crafts and other outdoor activities. The fee is \$500 for the entire week and includes a Kids Camp t-shirt, plus lunch, 2 snacks and water each day. Kellee Edwards, an experienced camp director and early childhood education professional, will be the Camp Director for the program.

Kellee Edwards grew up in San Diego, California. She attended Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY, and graduated with a BFA degree in Art and Design Education with highest honors. Kellee has taught in both the New York City Department of Education and the San Diego Unified School District. She ran the Child Care programs at Discovery Park for the Seattle Parks and Recreation/ARC, ages 5-12 for two years. She was responsible for the leadership and management of the entire summer camp program that included day-to-day camp activity planning and operation, curriculum development, first aide, scheduling, field trips, and budgeting. Kellee also volunteered in the education department at the Seattle Art Museum. Kellee Edwards currently works as the Preschool Director for the Ballard Community Center in Seattle, Washington with responsibility for the daily operation of the preschool program. She acts as administrator, supervisor and a primary classroom teacher. Kellee is pursuing her Masters of Education at the University of Washington, with a concentration in Educational Policy and is very excited to be a part of Whidbey Island Race Week.

The maximum number of attendees is 20 kids. As the Kids Camp program develops, the vision is to expand the program to include a youth racing program in an effort to build the next generation of racers in the Pacific Northwest. Registration materials for Kids Camp will be available for download on the event website at www.whidbeyislandraceweek.com beginning September 1, 2014. E-mail kidscamp@whidbeyislandraceweek.com for more information or to reserve a spot.

New for 2015 / Flat Fee & Early Bird Discount

Whidbey Island Race Week will offer a flat fee for event registration regardless of boat size. Registration is \$500 (with an early bird discount of \$100) if boats register prior to February 15, 2015. Additionally, a \$50 referral fee discount will be offered to any skipper who refers a boat who hasn't raced in the event in the last 3 years and completes registration at Whidbey Island Race Week in 2015. These combined offers brings registration to \$350 for those who participate.

New for 2015 / Ratings

Whidbey Island Race Week will use PHRF-NW ratings and there will be no rating adjustments or credits offered. This includes the removal of the 3-second credit previously offered to boats racing with children on board.

New for 2015 / Whidbey Island Race Week Advisory Board (Pictures Available Upon Request)

Charley and Schelleen Rathkopf formed an Advisory Board made up of experienced and respected sailors in the Pacific Northwest to help shape the direction of Whidbey Island Race Week to bring the event to its fullest potential. The Advisory Board meets monthly and began meeting in April of 2014.

2015 Whidbey Island Race Week Advisory Board

Avis Berney

Avis Berney is a retired marketing and public relations professional with extensive experience in managing competitive athletic events in community recreation programs. Avis learned to sail on the Columbia River in Portland, Oregon and has been on the race committee for Oak Harbor Yacht Club since 2005 and with Whidbey Island Race Week since 2006. She has also served on a number of boards and is currently on the board of the Oak Harbor Yacht Club and Oak Harbor Youth Sailing. A graduate of San Diego State University with a degree in Recreation Administration, Avis's past positions on boards include Oak Harbor Big Brother Big Sister, Oak Harbor Soroptimists, President of the Oregon School Public Relations Association, Southern California Municipal Athletic Federation, California Parks and Recreation Association and Chi Kappa Rho.

Leslie Keller

Leslie Keller has a long history at Whidbey Island Race Week and raced in the event from 1984 to 1998. She then did race committee and was the event scorekeeper from 1999 to 2004. Leslie is a Certified Public Accountant and has sailed a Hobie 33 for 35 years. She is also a US Sailing Regional Race Officer and member of US Sailing Race Management Training sub-committee. Additionally, Leslie's experience includes serving on the US Sailing Board of Directors as Treasurer and previously on the US Sailing Race Management Committee. She currently serves on the board of Sail Sand Point in Seattle and lives in Kirkland, Washington.

Larry Munns

Larry Munns is a retired Naval Officer and a current airline pilot for Southwest Airlines. A longtime Oak Harbor resident and boat owner since the 1970s, Larry has been a lifelong boater and currently owns and cruises on his Jeanneau 42DS. Larry has a long history at Whidbey Island Race Week. He has raced in the event since the 1980s and has been on the race committee team since 2011. Larry was the past Commodore of the NAS Whidbey Island Naval Sailing Association (WINSA) and Oak Harbor Sail Fleet Captain. Currently, he is the President of Oak Harbor Youth Sailing and a US Sailing Instructor for local programs in Oak Harbor and Assistant Coach of Wildcat Sailing at Oak Harbor High School.

Charlie Macauley

Charlie caught the sailboat racing bug in college and has been infected ever since. He has participated in every WIRW except two as either skipper or crew, racing the first ten years on his Backyard 28, Katrinka Finklesplatt. Kat Fink was retired from Race Week competition following WIRW No. 25 in 2007 and replaced with, Absolutely, a G&S One Tonner. Both daughters, Leigh and Shelagh, are integral parts of the crew - as is his wife Kathy who puts up with all the sailing shenanigans. Charlie is also a US Sailing Judge, Judge Instructor, and a member of the PIYA Appeals Committee. He is a long time member of Corinthian Yacht Club of Seattle.

Byron Skubi

Byron Skubi is a retired orthopedic surgeon with 40+ year experience as a racing and cruising sailor. Member of Oak Harbor Yacht Club since 1980 and past Commodore in 2009, Byron has competed in 32 Swiftsure races and every WIRW except one from its inception to 2009. He is Chairman of the Board of the Oak Harbor Youth Sailing Foundation and a US Sailing Level I sailing and powerboat instructor. Byron has also served as Oak Harbor Yacht Club Race Committee since 2010 and has been the PRO for San Juan 24 North Americans in 2012 and 2014, and for the San Juan 21 North Americans in 2014. He holds a US Coast Guard 100 ton Masters License and has been a Captain for Deception Pass Tours since 2010. Additionally, he's been active in the T37 model sailboat racing fleet and lives with wife, Jane Mays, on Penn Cove, Whidbey Island.

Philip Wise

Philip Wise also has long history at Whidbey Island Race Week, starting in 1994. He has raced the event on Counter Balance, a Frers 36 and also on White Cloud, a Cookson 12M. With both these programs, WIRW has always been a destination regatta and a highlight of Philip's sailing season. Philip grew up on a small lake in Springfield, Illinois where he started sailing with his family as a small child. He started out in Optis, stepped into Lasers, dabbled with Snipes and then eventually found his passion for sailing with the Star class. He has crewed on charter boats, sailing in both Europe and the Caribbean, and has logged multiple Atlantic crossings. Additionally, he has extensive sailing experience on Puget Sound, in British Columbia, and on the Pacific Ocean, including several Hawaii and Mexico deliveries.

New for 2015 / Steve Lapkin Named Official Event Photographer

Whidbey Island Race Week has named Steve Lapkin, of h2omark.com as the Official Photographer of Whidbey Island Race Week in 2015. Steve Lapkin is a freelance photographer and proprietor of h2omark.com. Steve's specialized genre includes on, off and above-the-water locales and venues.

A resident of Seattle, Washington, Steve is a native of Northern California (Lake Tahoe and the San Francisco Bay area.) He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications from University of Southern California and served as an officer in the United States Navy from 1970-1973. Steve's prior travels and working assignments have taken him to Asia, Europe, Canada and many areas of the United States. Steve works on behalf of West Marine, Travelers Insurance and for such noted boating publications and venues as Yachting, duPont Registry, Latitude 38, Sailing World, Scuttlebutt, Where Traveler, t2p.tv Productions and Ferrari Challenge. Steve's portfolio features unrivaled imagery of the classic wooden speedboats of Lake Tahoe, America's Cup World Series and America's Cup 34 at San Francisco; ROLEX Big Boat Series, San Francisco; Key West Race Week; Miami Sail Week; CST Moth International World Regatta; SAP International 505 World regatta and the RC44 Cup.

New for 2015 / Family Zones at Marina and Tent City

Whidbey Island Race Week will create a family zone for those camping with small children at the Oak Harbor Marina and/or in the camping area. When making moorage arrangements, skippers can request a slip in the family zone at no extra cost. The Oak Harbor Marina is located at 1401 SE Catatlina Dr., Oak Harbor, WA 98277 and moorage reservations can be made online at www.oakharbor.org or by calling 360-279-4575.

New for 2015 / Category Exclusivity in Sponsorship Plans

Whidbey Island Race Week has started the sponsor procurement effort for the 2015 event and is offering 10 category exclusive sponsorships. Additionally, 2015 sponsors will have the right of first refusal for Whidbey Island Race Week sponsorship in 2016.

This list reflects the current sponsor status of the event as of 7/15/14:

One Title Sponsorship: Available

Five Presenting Sponsorships:

Sailboat Gear Supplier: Fisheries Seattle

Sailmaker: Pending

Bank: Pending

Other: Available

Other: Available

One Title Sponsorship of Kids Zone: Available

One Supporting Sponsorship of Kids Zone: Pending

One Title Sponsorship of Tent City camping area: Available

One Awards Sponsorship: Available

Event Partners:

City of Oak Harbor

Oak Harbor Yacht Club

Oak Harbor Youth Sailing

In Kind Sponsors:

Seattle Children's Hospital

Smart Plug

Harken

Ocean Navigator Magazine

Other opportunities available

New for 2015 / Sponsor Appreciation Award

The crew that shows the most creative support for Whidbey Island Race Week sponsors at the post-race party event will be awarded the 1st Annual Sponsor Appreciation Award on Thursday night, July 24, 2015 during the post-race party event. Event sponsors will choose the recipient of this award.

New for 2015 / Customized Merchandise

Whidbey Island Race Week is offering an online store on the event website where skippers and their crew can pre-order official Whidbey Island Race Week merchandise. Participants will also be able to customize their orders to include a boat name on their purchased merchandise.

New for 2015 / Enhancements to the Post-Race Party Events

Six post-race parties will be offered Sunday, July 19 through Friday, July 24, 2015 from 6 pm to 8 pm at the Oak Harbor Yacht Club. The post-race party will include a Kid Zone area that includes kid's activities plus volleyball and bocce ball. Food service plans include the addition of up to 4 food trucks, and the addition of tables and chairs for attendee comfort. Additionally, wine and non-alcoholic drinks will be added to the beverage choices at the post-race events. Whidbey Island Race Week is also adding a late night showing of the Rocky Horror Picture Show and the return of Reggae Night. Whidbey Island Race Week will also be adding fun crew contests to the post-race events. Details about the post-race parties will be available on the event website by September 1, 2014.

New for 2015 / Doggy Day Care

Whidbey Island Race Week is working to set up a Doggy Day Care service for those travelling to Whidbey Island Race Week with their pet(s). Pets would be picked up at the Oak Harbor Marina by 10 am and returned safely to their owners by 6 pm. There will be a cost for this service. Program details will be posted on the event website when the program details are confirmed.

Whidbey Island Race Week Continues Exceptional Race Experience for PNW Sailors

Charley Rathkopf will continue to manage the race committee and serve as the Primary Race Officer on the water in 2015. Schelleen Rathkopf will manage the shore activities and sponsor fulfillment.

Charley and Schelleen Rathkopf have a long history of involvement with Whidbey Island Race Week. Charley has been serving as Primary Race Officer (PRO) since 2004 and prior to that, he served as mark boat operator and Deputy Race Officer for four years. He has also raced the event three times between 1997 and 2002. Schelleen has been serving as timekeeper or scorekeeper on the race committee for the last ten years.

Charley Rathkopf is a US Sailing Certified Regional Race Officer and has been running sailboat races on Puget Sound since 2000. He grew up in Stuart, Florida where he learned to sail and race Sunfish, Hobie Cats, and windsurfers and was eventually sponsored by the Bic/Dufour sailboard company. While attending the University of Florida, where he received his BS and master's degrees in Electrical Engineering and his master's degree in Business Administration, he competed in several Hobie national championships, placing 6th on one occasion on the Hobie 14 Turbo. After college, he raced keelboats in Florida and Louisiana. He eventually moved to Seattle, where he quickly became a regular on the sailing scene - racing on a variety of larger keelboats and Stars and crewing in the Star Worlds in Marina del Rey, California as well as several Bacardi Cups in Miami, Florida. Charley works as a computer software engineer at Pacific Interactive in Seattle, where he has been designing computer AV control and digital signage systems for Cisco Systems, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Caesars, Seattle Art Museum and the Experience Music Project.

Prior to starting a family, Schelleen Rathkopf had 20 years of professional marketing and promotion experience, including Promotions Director at Seattle Magazine and Sponsorship Coordinator at KING Broadcasting Company. Additionally, Schelleen served as the Sponsorship Coordinator for the Mallory and Irvine Research Expedition on Mount Everest in 1999, where she worked on the expedition's sponsor procurement and sponsor fulfillment on Mt. Everest. Schelleen learned to sail in 1996 at the Mount Baker Sailing and Rowing Center in Seattle. Before she and Charley started doing race committee work, Schelleen crewed on a variety of boats including J24s, SJ24s, C & C 32, Olson 30, Cookson 12M, and a Star.

Summary of Charley and Schelleen Rathkopf's race committee work:

- Whidbey Island Race Week, Oak Harbor, Washington / 2004-2014
- Seattle NOOD (National Offshore One Design) Regattas in Seattle, Washington / 2008-2014
- Puget Sound Spring Regatta (PSSR), Seattle, Washington / 2002-2014
- Puget Sound Sailing Championship (PSSC), Seattle, Washington / 2002-2013
- Laser North Americans / 2005
- Miami Olympic Classes Regatta / 2006
- Winter Vashon / 2007, 2012, 2013
- National Team Racing Championship, Seattle Yacht Club / 2010
- Corinthian Yacht Club's Wednesday Night Race Program / 2002-2014
- San Juan Island Round the County / 2013

Charley and Schelleen Rathkopf live in the Ballard neighborhood in Seattle, Washington and have two children: Arden (age 8 1/2) and Grace (age 5 1/2), who have accompanied their parents on race committee boats since birth. Race committee is a family affair for the Rathkopfs who look forward to attracting more families to Whidbey Island Race Week and building up the next generation of racers in the Pacific Northwest.

2015 Event Registration

2015 registration begins Monday, September 1, 2014 at www.whidbeyislandraceweek.com. There will be a limit of 150 boats for 2015.

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