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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WHIDBEY ISLAND RACE WEEK REGATTA ANNOUNCES YOUTH RACING CIRCLE, SPECTATOR CRUISES AND 2016 DATES

Seattle, Washington: Whidbey Island Race Week (WIRW), the premier sailboat-racing regatta in the Pacific Northwest, announces the addition of a youth racing circle happening July 18 & 19 at WIRW in 2015. Racing will take place in the bay just west of the Oak Harbor Marina and is open to all youth sailors in dinghies. Expected classes are CFJ (non-spinnaker), Laser (Standard and Radial), and Optimist (including Green fleet). This is a really exciting time for WIRW as we expand the race program to include youth. The Notice of Race (NOR) can be viewed at www.yachtscoring.com/emenu.cfm?eID=1197.

Erik Mann will be serving as Primary Race Officer (PRO) of the youth racing circle. Mann began sailing in Oak Harbor at the age of 14 in El Toros and San Juan 24's and has been active in keel boat racing in the Northwest for many years. In 2007, he got involved with Oak Harbor Youth Sailing (OHYS), as a volunteer instructor and later served on the OHYS board. He also coached the Anacortes High School Sailing Team for two years, and later founded and coached the Wildcat Sailing Team in Oak Harbor beginning in 2013. Erik Mann is passionate about helping the next generation of sailors excel in the sport of sailboat racing and WIRW is very fortunate to have Erik's experience on the team.

Whidbey Island Race Week will work to collaborate with the Northwest District of the Interscholastic Sailing Association (NWISA) to have WIRW added to the 2016 youth racing calendar. NWISA is the organizing body for high school sailing in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska and BC. High school sailing is open to all high school students in 9th-12th grade or homeschooled.

SPECTATOR CRUISES

Whidbey Island Race Week is also pleased to announce the addition of three spectator cruises on board the historic Schooner, SUVA in Coupeville, Washington during WIRW. Owner, Captain Mark Saia has created the Coupeville Maritime Heritage Foundation to support SUVA's educational and preservation programs. At 68 feet overall, and with her rich history in the Pacific Northwest, Suva's classic design will make for a spectacular sight in Penn Cove, the primary race course location of WIRW.

Whidbey Island Race Week spectator cruises are scheduled for Wednesday, July 22, Thursday, July 23 and Friday, July 24, from 11:30 am - 1:30 pm. Participants are invited to bring their own food and beverages on board and cruises will depart from the Coupeville dock. A WIRW representative will also be on board to answer questions and offer explanations about the sailboat racing.

There are 22 tickets available for each cruise. Reservations are required and a suggested donation of \$40 per person confirms the reservation. Reservations can be made by contacting Whidbey Island Race Week directly at (schelleen@whidbeyislandraceweek.com) or (206) 384-5254. Checks can be made payable to the Coupeville Maritime Heritage Foundation and mailed to: Whidbey Island Race Week, 2400 NW 80th Street #130, Seattle, WA 98117. The Whidbey Island Race Week Kids Camp participants will also take a cruise on SUVA on Tuesday, July 21, 2015, 11:30 am to 1 pm.

WHIDBEY ISLAND RACE WEEK 2016

Whidbey Island Race Week announces the dates for the 2016 event: July 9-15, 2016

Dinghy/Small Boat/Youth Racing, July 9 – July 10, 2016

Large Boat Racing, July 11 – July 15, 2016

Sponsors of 2015 Whidbey Island Race Week:

Event Host: Oak Harbor Yacht Club

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Whidbey Local Search

Other Developments at Whidbey Island Race Week:

WIRW Event Schedule

Superior race management combined with fun crew contests, expanded food and beverage choices, the return of Reggae Night and Outdoor Movie Nights and more. The current WIRW Event Schedule is available at <http://www.whidbeyislandraceweek.com/schedule>.

About Whidbey Island Race Week

Whidbey Island Race Week is the premier sailboat racing event in the Pacific Northwest. For 32 years, thousands of sailboat racers have made their way to Oak Harbor, Washington each July to participate in this week-long sailboat racing regatta. The venue for the event is the Oak Harbor Yacht Club & Oak Harbor Marina and the PHRF and One Design racing is offered inside Penn Cove near Coupeville and Saratoga Passage. Boats under 24 feet will race Saturday, July 18 and Sunday, July 19. The big boats will race daily Monday, July 20 through Friday, July 24. For the past 11 years, US Sailing Certified Regional Race Officer Charley Rathkopf has served as the Primary Race Officer for Whidbey Island Race Week and his race committee team has earned the reputation of offering some of the best race management in the country. Information about the new WIRW ownership by Schelleen and Charley Rathkopf and their race and event management experience and the WIRW Advisory Board can be found at www.whidbeyislandraceweek.com

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