



## NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Shirley Roberts, Executive Director  
BaySail

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Phone: 989-895-5193

E-Mail: [shirleyr@baysailbaycity.org](mailto:shirleyr@baysailbaycity.org)

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# ICONIC SHIPS LEAD THE WAY TO BAY CITY'S TRI-ANNUAL TALL SHIP CELEBRATION FESTIVAL JULY 18—21, 2019

[Bay City, Michigan] When the tall ship fleet arrives in Bay City, MI for the community's celebrated maritime festival, the city by the Saginaw Bay will earn another accolade: longest, continuously serving host port in the Great Lakes. The July 2019 event will mark the seventh consecutive time Bay City has hosted the tall ship fleet. Bay City has also won the coveted "Port of the Year" award from Tall Ships America for four of the previous six festivals, more than any other host community in all of North America. And when the fleet arrives on July 18<sup>th</sup>, it will include iconic ships that have enchanted people for generations.

### The Fleet

Returning to Bay City for the first time since a 6-year long, \$20+ million restoration, Nova Scotia's famous tall ship *Bluenose II* will be a highlight of the festival this year. The iconic ship whose image graces the Canadian dime hasn't been seen in Bay City since the first Tall Ship Celebration festival in 2001. The ship is a faithful replica of the original Bluenose schooner that was launched in 1921 and was undefeated in international racing competition for 17 years.

The Barque *Picton Castle* will make her way back to Bay City following her seventh world circumnavigation voyage featuring stops in Panama, Galapagos, Pitcairn, French Polynesia, Cook Islands, Vanuatu, Bali, Reunion, South Africa, St. Helena and the Caribbean. Picton Castle visited Bay City just once in 2006 and will be the largest Class A vessel in the fleet this summer.

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New to the Great Lakes and the Bay City event is the 95 ft. long **Santa Maria**, an authentic replica of Christopher Columbus' flagship. Santa Maria is a sister ship to *El Galeón Andalucía*, the popular Spanish galleon that visited Bay City in 2016. She was built in Spain and launched in 2018. While her design is authentic, Santa Maria was constructed using modern techniques. Her hull is fiberglass covered in wood.

**Perception** is a 68 ft. schooner owned by a new Michigan-based organization, Michigan Challenge Traditional Sail Training based in Traverse City. Perception was built in New Zealand and launched in 1985. Her former owner sailed her from New Zealand to Australia, Brazil, the Galapagos, the Caribbean and Portugal. Today she is a sail training vessel for Gold Star teens (children of fallen military heroes); the children of deployed, wounded, or ill veterans; grieving youth; and veterans and their families.

Other returning vessels include the **Pride of Baltimore II**, a 157 ft. Baltimore clipper, and **Madeline**, a 95 ft. gaff topsail schooner from Traverse City, perennial favorites at every Bay City event since 2001. The sail training vessel **St. Lawrence II** from Toronto, Canada, a 72 ft. brigantine, was last seen at Tall Ship Celebration in 2001. The **Denis Sullivan** is a 137 ft. 3-masted schooner from Milwaukee, WI and the Flagship **Niagara** is a 198 ft. brig from Erie, PA that will join the Bay City fleet for the third and fourth times, respectively.

Bay City's own tall ships, the 85 ft. schooner **Appledore IV** and the 65 ft. schooner **Appledore V** will offer a full schedule sail away trips during the festival. Visit [www.tallshipcelebration.com](http://www.tallshipcelebration.com) for tickets or for more information.

Each visiting vessel in the tall ship fleet are paid an Appearance Fee for their participation. In 2019, total appearance fees are expected to exceed \$255,000.

### The Sponsors

The Michigan Sugar Company has taken the helm of the 2019 Tall Ship Celebration festival as Presenting Sponsor. This is the first year the company has participated as a major/ship sponsor. Eight Great Lakes Bay Region companies are returning as major/ship sponsors: Huntington Bank (also as FirstMerit and Citizens Bank) has been a ship sponsor for five previous events. Ascension St. Mary's of Michigan and Independent Bank have each sponsored ships four times before. Wildfire Credit Union and Consumers Energy have sponsored ships three times before. McLaren Bay Regional Medical Center (as Bay Medical Center) is a three time major/ship sponsor in 2019. 2003. Chemical Bank which sponsored a ship in 2016 will be joined by AmeriLodge Group as a co-sponsor for this year's event. D.H.T., a multi-faceted transportation company based in Reese, MI is a first-time major/ship sponsor in 2019.

Companies in the major ship sponsor category have invested between \$20,000 and \$50,000, funds that help defray the cost of ship appearance fees and support services. They will each have the opportunity to select "their" sponsored ship at a special event in March.

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"The companies and organizations that have agreed to invest in Tall Ship Celebration recognize the importance of the event to our community and our region," explained Mary Lou Benecke, Chairman of the Tall Ship Celebration Planning Council. "Representing the state of Michigan to the tall ship fleet, the other Great Lakes states and the more than 100,000 people from around the world who are expected to attend is a humbling and daunting task. It would not be possible without the strategic investment of our sponsors."

#### **Organizational Background**

The **TALL SHIPS® CHALLENGE** is a series of races and rallies produced annually by Tall Ships America, a non-profit membership organization based in Newport, Rhode Island. The event rotates among the east and west coast of the United States and the Great Lakes.

Tall Ship Celebration: Bay City hosts the fleet when it visits the Great Lakes. Bay City has been the only official host port in the state of Michigan since 2006. Tall Ship Celebration is a production of BaySail, a non-profit educational organization that owns and operates the tall ships *Appledore IV* and *V*. More than 45,000 students have participated in a shipboard program aboard a BaySail vessel over the last 20 years.

For more information about Tall Ship Celebration or BaySail, contact Shirley Roberts by phone at 989-895-5193, by email at [Shirleyr@baysailbaycity.org](mailto:Shirleyr@baysailbaycity.org), or visit the following websites: [www.tallshipcelebration.com](http://www.tallshipcelebration.com) or [www.baysailbaycity.org](http://www.baysailbaycity.org).

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**Editor's Note:** Vessel profiles and photos are available at [www.tallshipcelebration.com](http://www.tallshipcelebration.com)