

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:**

**Meaghan Van Liew**

**(843) 722-1030 ext 12**

[mvanliew@scmaritime.org](mailto:mvanliew@scmaritime.org)

## Buccaneers and Boaters Swarm for Charleston Harbor Fest

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA (May 7, 2008)—Take a dock party and add four traditional tall ships. Then throw in over 50 pirates, several swashbuckling swordsmen, a few boatbuilding families, some sailing lessons, a classic boat exhibition, two dozen kid-friendly activities, a handful of extreme water sports and even a living history exhibit. What do you get? Charleston Harbor Fest, which is set to rock the harbor—both in peninsular Charleston and Mt. Pleasant—beginning May 16.

Formerly known as The Charleston Maritime Festival/Tall Ships Charleston, Charleston Harbor Fest now celebrates the traditional aspects of this region's maritime heritage as well as the more modern practices of those who love the water. Throughout this fun-filled weekend, a continuous series of events, exhibitions, and hands-on activities will entertain and enlighten at two venues on the harbor.

At the Charleston Maritime Center and surrounding areas, you can tour the tall ships, visit the authentic pirate camp, indulge in the exhibition of classic boats, learn about the Gullah/Geechee heritage of this region, try your hand at family boatbuilding, take a sailing lesson or row a traditional gig from the Mosquito Fleet. There will also be food and music, and dozens more activities for kids, both educational and entertaining.

At Patriots Point in Mt. Pleasant, you can be either a spectator or a participant at the Water Action Village Expo (WAVE). Take in the exhilarating MasterCraft Rail Jam where experienced riders pull off mesmerizing tricks. Or check out a tantalizing array of water sports equipment for boaters, surfers, and kayakers. You can also sample a helicopter tour of the harbor (\$20 per person), climb a rock wall, or build and design a model plane. Don't miss the aerobatic flight demos Saturday and Sunday over the harbor next to the USS Yorktown (11:15 am and 2:00 pm show times). There will also be a full spectrum of activities for children, including jump castles, face painting, and balloon art.

The two venues will be served by shuttle buses (included with purchase of a wristband) and water taxis (\$4 each way or \$3 for wristband holders) all three days of the event. Admission to Charleston Harbor Fest is free, but wristbands are required to board the tall ships and shuttle buses and some rides and exhibitions require payment. Wristbands offer a host of discounts at Charleston attractions including USS Yorktown, SpiritLine cruises, the SC Aquarium, The Gibbes Museum, The Charleston Water Taxi, and Charleston Harbor Tours. Wristbands are available before the event online through the event website at [www.charlestonharborfest.org](http://www.charlestonharborfest.org) for \$12 each for 12+ years, \$5 each for children 6-11

years with advance purchase. Onsite tickets at the event entrance are \$15 for 12+ years and \$5 for children 6-11 years. Children five years and under are free.

The public is encouraged to park at Patriots Point and utilize the shuttle buses and water taxis for access to the downtown attractions. Additionally, the City of Charleston garages at the SC Aquarium and the Gaillard Auditorium are offering a daily flat rate of \$5.

The weekend's highlights include:

- Festival grounds open Friday-Sunday 10:00 am – 5:00 pm with free general admission
- Four **traditional tall ships** berthed at the Charleston Maritime Center, including *The Spirit of South Carolina* (141 feet), *The Amistad* (129 feet), *The Schooner Virginia* (122 Feet) and the *Corwith Cramer* (134 feet). (Friday-Sunday 10:00 am – 5:00 pm; boarding passes required – Corwith Cramer closed on Sunday)
  - A **band of marauding buccaneers** will celebrate the 290<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Blackbeard the pirate's siege of Charleston by marching to the Powder Magazine building (Cumberland and Church Streets) to overpower the guards and free fellow pirates. (9:00 a.m. Saturday, May 17)
  - The **Harbor Fest Treasure Quest**—a treasure hunt for teams of 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade South Carolina students who will use their knowledge of history, math, science, and ship terminology to puzzle through clues and find the treasure. The winning team receives a free educational sail aboard the *Spirit of South Carolina*.
  - **Pirate Costume Contest and Parade**, Friday and Saturday at 3:00 pm. and 1:00 pm on Sunday. Come dressed as a pirate and give your best “ARRRRGH!” All ages welcome!
  - **Rail Jam Presented by MasterCraft and The Drive 100.5**—witness the exhilarating action as riders are towed by high-speed winches across the water and onto launching rails. (shows daily at 12:00, 1:00, 3:00, and 4:00 pm produced by Step Up Productions)
  - **Aerobic Flight Show**—watch the high-flying daredevils loop, spin and swirl (11:15 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Sat. and Sun. with best viewing from the USS Yorktown or Patriots Point festival grounds)

Charleston Harbor Fest is sure to be a fun extravaganza for the whole family.

Charleston Harbor Fest is an event of the South Carolina Maritime Foundation. Proceeds from this festival support educational programs for South Carolina youth aboard the *Spirit of South Carolina* tall ship. Sponsors of Charleston Harbor Fest include The Charleston Convention and Visitors Bureau, Carolina MasterCraft, NOAA, Clear Channel Radio, The Drive 100.5, The Post & Courier, Bauer International, Step Up Productions, Rising High and partners include The Gibbes Museum, Patriots Point, SpiritLine Cruises, the SC Aquarium, Charleston Water Taxi and Charleston Harbor Tours. For additional information, event updates, and tickets visit [www.charlestonharborfest.org](http://www.charlestonharborfest.org) or call (843) 722-1030.

###