



Flagship Niagara League

150 E Front Street, Suite 100, Erie, PA 16507-1594

Telephone (814) 452-2744 ext. 223 Fax (814) 455-6760

E: eahlgren@flagshipniagara.org W: www.flagshipniagara.org

Press Release (For Immediate Release)

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FLAGSHIP NIAGARA LEAGUE SHATTERS TALL SHIPS ERIE GOALS

The Flagship Niagara League (FNL) is proud to announce final numbers and details for the Tall Ships Erie Festival that took place September 5-8.

Tall Ships Erie 2013, presented by Highmark and Perry 200, was a huge success. The historic event took place on Erie's bayfront with ships docked at the Bayfront Convention Center, Erie Maritime Museum and Dobbins Landing. The event was a memorable one, as we commemorated the bicentennial of the Battle of Lake Erie and welcomed 10 different ships from all over the world.

Tall Ships Erie broke their goal of 60,000 visitors, and are pleased to announce that over 83,000 visitors participated during the four-day festival. Proceeds for the event netted FNL over \$450,000. Shawn Waskiewicz, Executive Director of FNL, "This is a historic day for the Flagship Niagara League. I want to personally thank our 900 volunteers, committee chairs, Board of Trustees, and our guests who made this all possible. This is not just a great day for FNL, but for The City of Erie and business owners."

In addition, FNL is proud to support local non-profits for all of their hard work and assistance during Tall Ships. In total, \$8,390 will be donated. The following recipients are;

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| ➤ The ANNA Shelter | \$2,500 |
| ➤ Erie Playhouse | \$2,195 |
| ➤ Gannon University Schuster Theatre | \$2,195 |
| ➤ McDowell Jr. ROTC | \$1,000 |
| ➤ Arts Erie | \$500 |

Funds from the festival will be earmarked to keep *Niagara* sailing. Projects include dry-docking in October, paying off the remaining balance of the sail-replacement project, general repairs and maintenance, and supporting the *Niagara* Trainee Scholarship Fund. FNL's budget in 2013 is \$2.1m. During a non-Tall Ship season, the budget is closer to \$1.6m. FNL needs to sustain a budget close to \$2m to ensure that *Niagara* continues to sail.

The FNL is a 501 (C) 3, non-profit educational associate organization of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC), chartered to facilitate citizen participation and operation of the Flagship Niagara and its homeport, Erie Maritime Museum. All proceeds benefit the Flagship Niagara League.

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For additional comments, contact Erin Ahlgren at 814-452-2744 x223.

DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP!