

ONE SKY CHALLENGERS CUP RETURNS TO PORTSMOUTH

After two years in dry dock, the One Sky Challengers Cup is returning to the Seacoast this summer as the One Sky Challengers Cup Benefit Regatta and Poker Run, to give individuals with disabilities a chance to get out on the water again and participate in boating activities.

The benefit returns on July 13 with fun, competitive events for boats while the Isles of Shoals Steamship Co. and the Gundalow Co. welcome One Sky's clientele aboard their vessels to view the competition and enjoy some quality sailing and cruising time. For more than 35 years, One Sky Community Services has provided services for people with developmental disabilities and acquired brain disorders in 24 Rockingham County towns and cities. And for more than two decades, the people One Sky serves had the opportunity every summer to enjoy a day of boating on the Seacoast.

Begun in collaboration with the Kittery Point Yacht Club in 1991, the Challengers Cup opened gangplanks up and down the Piscataqua River to hundreds of people with disabilities to board everything from small yachts and lobster boats to catamarans and cabin cruisers to enjoy some time on the water. The Cup was put on hold for logistical reasons, but it returns this year as an expanded event with PHRF sailboat racing for Racing and Cruising classes, and a powerboat "Poker Run" but also as a major fundraiser for the One Sky Readiness Fund.

For organizer Tom Schladenhauffen, it's a way for the Seacoast's boaters to give back to the community. "The idea is to get as many boats on the water as we can," he says. "We don't care what kind of boat you have." One Sky clients will have the opportunity to either participate as a member of the team on one of the boats or be an observer on one of the very large boats.



THE ONE SKY CHALLENGERS CUP BENEFIT REGATTA AND POKER RUN WILL TAKE PLACE ON SATURDAY, JULY 13.

All the money raised through the event will go directly to the One Sky Readiness Fund. As Schladenhauffen explains, the Fund was created out of a growing need from those individuals and families served by One Sky for additional financial support to help fill in the gaps that their budgets cannot cover. The Fund helps cover the high costs of such things as extensive dental care, home repairs and modifications, food, clothing and medical supplies as well as providing emergency assistance in the event of an illness or income loss.

In the short three years of its existence, the Readiness Fund has become a vital asset to One Sky to ensure that people with disabilities keep receiving the supports and services they need to stay connected to community life. "As the age of those we serve increases, so have their needs, combined with the workforce and budgetary constraints facing New Hampshire, we are in

the midst of a highly challenging financial and service delivery environment. We are so glad to have the Fund and can't imagine what we would do without it," stated One Sky CEO Chris Muns.

Schladenhauffen is Rear Commodore of the Kittery Point Yacht Club and Vice Commodore of the Piscataqua Sailing Association and he organizes the Commodore's Cup Series that includes five separate regattas over the course of each summer. Schladenhauffen is not only excited about bringing back the One Sky Challengers Cup but also for a more personal reason - his sister is a client of One Sky and uses a wheelchair.

"We both love the water," he says. "When you're on the water, there's some magic there that happens all the time."

"We are just as excited as Tom about the new

Challengers Cup Benefit because those we serve have loved it for years and Tom is taking it to the next level. They will have a lot of fun on the water, but be more engaged with the community," Muns said. While the sailboats in the Regatta engage in classic buoy racing, the powerboats will engage in a competitive "Poker Run" that involves navigating to five different stations where each boat will get a playing card. At the after-party, boaters will see who compiled the best poker hand.

After the boating activities, awards will be given at a social to be held at the UNH Pavilion at the U.S. Coast Guard Station on New Castle Island where everyone involved, including sailors, boaters, One Sky clients, sponsors, and the general public can enjoy some social time together. And experience just what a true community can be.

If you would like participate in some way, please contact Tom Schladenhauffen, rearcommodore@kpyc.net (603-502-7885) or Billie Tooley at One Sky Community Services, b.tooley@oneskyservices.org (603-436-6111).



Incorporated in 1983, One Sky Community Services has been dedicated to providing a comprehensive array of services, supports and programs to individuals and families with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as acquired brain disorders. A private 5013C nonprofit organization, it is the designated area agency serving the following communities: Brentwood, Deerfield, East Kingston, Epping, Exeter, Fremont, Greenland, Hampton, Hampton Falls, Kensington, Kingston, New Castle, Newfields, Newington, Newmarket, North Hampton, Northwood, Nottingham, Portsmouth, Raymond, Rye, Seabrook, South Hampton and Stratham. One Sky works with nearly 1,200 individuals and families on a yearly basis.