

PORTSMOUTH PARTNERSHIP

Promoting economic growth, leadership and education within the City of Portsmouth

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OPSAIL ROCKS!

Three exquisite tall ships along the Portsmouth waterfront: \$60,000... Balloons festooning the walkway between the seawall and a shady café: \$34... WAVY and WVEC television news time trumpeting the “Olde Towne alternative” to Norfolk’s crowds and long lines: PRICELESS!

The Portsmouth Partnership’s efforts to bring OpSail2012Virginia to our city paid off in a spectacular way. Thanks to a cooperative effort with Norfolk’s Festevents, Ocean Marine, volunteers from TowneBank and the Lefcoe Leadership program, the U.S. Coast Guard, the City of Portsmouth, Olde Towne’s museums, restaurants and businesses, visitors were treated to three days’ worth of free parking, free ship tours and free music courtesy of the Partnership and the Portsmouth Seawall Music Festival. In the end, the Partnership Foundation’s budget of over \$73,000 was more than covered by sponsorships and income, leaving something in the kitty for continued projects and grant-making.

Nay-sayers, who for months had termed the event “FlopSail,” doubted that Portsmouth could attract crowds sufficient to make the effort worthwhile. Indeed, challenges abounded: while High Street Landing offers electrical power, neither water nor power are available anywhere along the city’s seawall south of that point. Further, the city’s seawall construction does not accommodate the physical docking of tall ships. Plus, in the face of so much marketing by our sister city across the river, how could we effectively market ourselves to the larger market?



Kalmar Nyckel, top, Virginia Youth Symphony, above

Hill House Museum would send word to their subscribers, plus provide free tours marketed to our city’s school

The Partnership’s volunteer group found the answers. Ocean Marine, just south of the city’s seawall, would host tall ships Kalmar Nyckel and HMS Bounty, and arrange to get water to the Gazela, docked at High Street landing. The U.S. Coast Guard’s Cutter William Tate, a self-contained ship, would tie up just south of Gazela. A pirate group would help to direct visitors toward the Ocean Marine tall ships and the nearby TOpSail Café, where guests found music, food, beverages, games and face-painting. An air-conditioned trolley would run a 7-minute circuit between the nTelos Wireless Pavilion’s traffic circle and North landing, with four stops in between. The city’s Naval Shipyard and Lightship Museums, the Virginia Sports Hall of Fame and the



children. Finally the City's Seawall Music Festival marketing efforts would be complemented by the Festevents OpSail2012Virginia web site and the thousands of email and facebook friends of the Partnership's PortsEvents and Lefcoe Leadership affiliates. As a bonus, WAVY and WVEC got wind of our plans, and interviewed David Cartier of Starboard's Coffee Kiosk, Jim Bento of Ocean Marine, and Don Comer of the Portsmouth Partnership for their news broadcasts.



The result? Over 5,400 visitors toured the three tall ships and Coast Guard cutter; the Visitors' Center hosted nearly 2,000 guests, and rang up nearly \$3,800 in merchandise sales; the Portsmouth-Norfolk ferry logged 32,200 weekend trips, beating Harborfest 2007's previous record of 24,000; over 160 transient boaters reserved spaces in Portsmouth marinas; restaurants were packed; and 225 kids from four of Portsmouth's elementary schools plugged into the Adopt-a-Ship program, capped with a specially-tailored visit on board the three visiting tall ships on a beautiful, sunny Monday morning.

Businesses like David and Betsy Cartier's Starboard's Coffee Kiosk seized the unique opportunity, developing special marketing and product plans. Their best day ever was Friday . . . until Saturday, that is!

Kids at the helm, top, and lessons in leverage



Kalmar Nyckel and HMS Bounty at Ocean Marine

The Partnership thanks its sponsors, W.F. Magann Corp, Ocean Marine Yacht Center, Sales Systems, Dominion Virginia Power, the City of Portsmouth and all of the individuals and organizations that made OpSail2012Virginia a success by working with a positive attitude toward a positive result.



The TOPSail Café offered tunes, food, souvenirs, cold drinks and shade



PORTSMOUTH PARTNERSHIP - CITY OF PORTSMOUTH - PHRA
GPDC 14 years 1,000 jobs \$14,000,000 tax revenue

