

PRESS RELEASE  
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## ***Mill Neck's Sail the Sound for Deafness*** **A Successful Inaugural Launch**

On Thursday August 9, the Mill Neck Family of Organizations hosted its first “*Sail the Sound for Deafness*” charitable Sailing Regatta in Oyster Bay. To date the Regatta raised \$10,000 to benefit the Mill Neck Family of Organizations, a group of organizations serving people who are Deaf and/or have other special communication needs, locally, nationally and around the world. Programs include Deaf education, early childhood education for children with speech and language delays, services for Deaf adults, audiology and sign language interpreter services.

Oakcliff Sailing, one of the event’s co-hosts, made their fleet available for an enthusiastic race around Oyster Bay and out onto the Sound. Spectators watched the race from aboard the oyster sloop Cristeen, graciously provided by The WaterFront Center, another co-host. Several other Oyster Bay organizations were also aboard as Regatta co-hosts, including the Oyster Bay Marine Center, the North Oyster Bay Baymen’s Association, Sagamore Yacht Club, Sweet Tomato and Seawanhaka Corinthian Yacht Club.

Months of planning had gone into “Sail the Sound for Deafness,” and many organizations, along with Oakcliff, pledged involvement from the beginning. According to Dawn Reilly, Executive Director at Oakcliff, lending support to the event, “just made sense.” She explained, “We get approached by many different charities. When Mill Neck came to us, we said, let’s do this one. Some of our trainees have hearing problems, a couple of our sailors are completely deaf. My cousin is deaf. I sailed in an America’s Cup with a woman who is deaf.”

With warm temperatures and a decent sailing wind, the boats made their way out onto the water. Of the boats in the Regatta that evening, four were specifically designated to race for particular Mill Neck causes. Of the classics provided by Oakcliff, Banzai raced for Deaf education; Nautilus represented preschoolers with special needs at the Early Childhood Center (ECC);

Storm raced for services for Deaf adults and Clio took to the water for hearing health awareness. Coming in first was Nautilus, built in 1905 and sailed that evening by Donald Street, III, a world-class sailor, who is Deaf. Street, who works at Oyster Bay Marine Center, is well acquainted with Mill Neck, as his young son, Luke, also Deaf, was once a student in the preschool program. “Luke loved Mill Neck,” he said. “He also loves sailing and will be happy when I hang up the (first-place) silver plate for him.”

In addition to “their” boat taking first place, congratulations are in order to ECC for also raising the most money for their cause, earning the right to display the Mill Neck Cup in their building for the next year. While they put together a bake sale, the Deaf Education Center came up with their own fundraising ideas to support Banzai. Students and teachers held an ice cream fundraiser in mid-July, donating an initial \$107 toward their cause. DEC also put together a “Nautical Carnival” right before the Regatta, which featured hand-crafted signs and props highlighting various games and activities. Sailing themes were incorporated in many summer school lessons, from the colorful sailboat crafts the children created to visits to and by The WaterFront Center, where students got a close-up look at various sea creatures. Contributions by Mill Neck Services for Deaf Adults included several trips into the community to promote the Regatta and Storm, their representative boat. Overall, there was “healthy competition among the Organizations, especially as the Regatta got closer,” said Nancy Leghart, Director of Advancement for the Mill Neck Family of Organizations.

Following the race, a gala cocktail party was held at the historic Mill Neck Manor House. At this spectacular, Tudor Revival mansion, guests sampled tastings from a number of Long Island’s finest establishments. Some featured items included oysters, seafood ceviche, salads and pasta dishes, along with wines, ginger beer and assorted cocktails among the refreshments. As guests mingled throughout the mansion and gathered on the terrace overlooking Long Island Sound, they enjoyed swing and big band music graciously provided by the Golden Tones Orchestra. The evening was capped off with the presentation of sailing awards. In addition to Nautilus’s first-place win, Banzai and Caper took the trophies for second and third place, respectively. Awards were also given to those individuals who raised most money and the title of “Most Elegant Yacht” went to Clio.

Hosting the party at a 1920s-era Gold Coast mansion seemed a natural fit for a classic regatta. As Leghart noted, “This is a way to show off our mansion, which is a piece of art, along with the classic wooden boats, which also are works of art.” She also emphasized the Manor’s role in bringing awareness to Mill Neck’s organizations. While the Manor may be a breathtaking venue for events, its bigger purpose lies in “bringing people to our campus, which increases awareness in what we do and the services we can provide.”

The Mill Neck Family of Organizations would very much like to thank all who helped insure the success of the inaugural “Sail the Sound for Deafness” benefit, including these sponsors and contributors: Captain Sponsor: Mayor and Mrs. Peter Quick; Skipper Sponsors: Mill Max Manufacturing Corp.; Sphere Interiors, Inc.; Advertising: Oyster Bay Guardian; Food and Beverages: Angelina’s; Banfi Vintners; Basil Leaf Café; Cedar Creek; Coach Grill and Tavern; Frank’s Beverage Center; Gooseberry Grove; Gosling’s; Great South Bay Brewery; Jack Halyards; Kirk Larson; Locust Valley Deli; Mill Creek Tavern; North Oyster Bay Baymen’s

Association; NYIT/deSeversky; Pirate Brands; Regatta Ginger Beer; Schultz's; Sweet Tomato; Wild Honey.

The Organization is also grateful to the following contributors of donated items: Maritime, Inc.; Michael Peter Hayes Art Salon; North Sails; Not Just Art, Inc.; Peninsula Oriental Cuisine; Dimitry Schidlovsky; Smokin' Al's BBQ Joint; Sunflower Fine Art; Tidewater Marine Supply; Tula Kitchen; West Marine; West Shore Marina. A world of thanks as well to all the sailors, committee members, volunteers, guests, staff, students and families, whose support of the event is most appreciated.

The Mill Neck Family of Organizations is dedicated to serving individuals who are Deaf, hard of hearing and/or have other special needs through educational, vocational and spiritual programs and services. For more information about any of its programs, please call 516-922-4100 or visit <http://www.millneck.org>. 'Like' Mill Neck on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/millneck](http://www.facebook.com/millneck)

#### Photo Captions:

1. Nautilus, a 1905 classic sailboat, took first place in Mill Neck's inaugural "Sail the Sound for Deafness" benefit regatta. Photo credit: © Yana Frangiskos.
2. Nancy Leghart (left), Director of Advancement for the Mill Neck Family of Organizations, with Dawn Reilly, Executive Director at Oakcliff Sailing Center.
3. Sailing regatta committee member and Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf Occupational Therapist Gary Cassidy and Chris Oddo, Associate Director of Mill Neck Services for Deaf Adults.
4. Several staff of Oakcliff Sailing Center, along with members of the Center's Sapling sailing program enjoy a memorable evening at Mill Neck Manor House.
5. A display of boats created by students in Mill Neck Manor's Deaf Education Center provides nautical décor to the Manor House party.
6. Donald Street III, a world-class sailor who is Deaf, won the "Sail the Sound for Deafness" Regatta on Nautilus, the classic which raced for preschoolers with special needs at the Early Childhood Center.
7. Mill Neck Director of Advancement Nancy Leghart (center) presents the 2<sup>nd</sup> place award to Banzai sailor Karen Martin (2<sup>nd</sup> from left), of KJOY. Joining them are Dave Waldo, Executive Director at The WaterFront Center and Dawn Reilly, Executive Director at Oakcliff Sailing Center.

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