



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Barby MacGowan, Media Pro Int'l, barby.macgowan@mediapronewport.com, 401-849-0220, or Judith Enstone, TSRI, stoutco@aol.com, 401-423-3550

Governor Proclaims Tall Ship *Oliver Hazard Perry* as Rhode Island's Own

Reception Highlights Future Programs and Benefits

NEWPORT, R.I. (Nov. 6, 2008) – Aboard the 132-foot steel hull of Rhode Island's future Tall Ship *Oliver Hazard Perry*, Rhode Island Governor Donald L. Carcieri ceremoniously raised his state's flag today, after proclaiming that the vessel, during its construction and when it is sailing, will not only symbolize the state's rich maritime history but also represent the importance of the marine trades to Rhode Island's sound economic future. Once it is sailing in 2011, the *Oliver Hazard Perry* will be a fully operational, sailing school vessel measuring in at 207 feet in length and boasting a majestic three-masted, square rig that stands 13 stories tall.

"Rhode Island is known for its rich maritime heritage," said Governor Carcieri, noting particularly its ties to the formation of the American Navy and its stature as the current home of the U.S. Naval War College and Naval Education and Training Center. "That's why it is very fitting for the Ocean State to have its own Tall Ship."

The hull arrived at Bowen's Wharf in Newport at the end of October, having been bought from a Canadian group by the non-profit Tall Ships Rhode Island (TSRI), Inc., best known for bringing to Rhode Island the magnificent Tall Ships events of 1992, 2000, 2004 and 2007. The organization has just over \$3 million left to raise of the projected \$5 million it will take to complete the *Oliver Hazard Perry* as Rhode Island's own.

Drawings prepared by naval architect Dave Bonney of Bay Marine, Inc. (Barrington, R.I.) show how the hull will ballast lower in the water once outfitted. In addition, a second deck will be added seven feet above the current one, allowing cabins, classrooms and work stations to be accommodated below it, while the towering rig will give it the signature profile of the warship captured by renowned Rhode Island naval war hero Oliver Hazard Perry when he secured victory for the United States in the War of 1812.

“Not only will the Oliver Hazard Perry help fuel our economy by creating jobs in the boat building industry in Rhode Island, but it will also be a great educational tool for our students,” said Carcieri. “I know that there are plans to have students in our schools help build this vessel, and once it is complete it will offer students an opportunity to learn about sailing.”

Prior to the flag ceremony--which included a musket salute by the Artillery Company of Newport and the hoisting of the American flag as well as one emblazoned with Perry's famous “Don't Give up the Ship” battle cry--the Governor took part in a presentation by TSRI to the public and the press at nearby Seaman's Church Institute. TSRI Chairman Bart Dunbar reminded the audience that his organization, formed originally in 1992 as Tall Ships Newport, always has been dedicated to education at sea and has facilitated offshore experiences for many young adults since its inception, one as recently as this past summer aboard the Tall Ship *Spirit of South Carolina*.

Introduced by Dunbar was Michael Jarret, an instructor at Chariho (RI) Career and Technical Center who has recruited dozens of students from its Marine Technology Program to participate in TSRI's past programs. “I've been teaching since the early '90s and this is hands-down the most rewarding experience to see the gains made by these young adults when they go offshore aboard a Tall Ship,” said Jarrett.

Accompanying Jarret was Stephanie Roberts (S. Kingstown, R.I.), a graduate from the Chariho program who now attends Massachusetts Maritime Academy as a freshman. Roberts participated on a TSRI trip aboard the *Prince William* during the Amica Insurance Tall Ships Rhode Island 2007 with 35 other young adults. “I had never been on the ocean before and it made me think of what I really wanted to do with my experiences,” said Roberts, who came smartly dressed in her cadet uniform.

TSRI's Director of Operations is Captain Richard Bailey (Wellfleet, Mass.), who commanded the 179 ft. *HMS Rose* when it was the largest active wooden Tall Ship in the world. “That ship is now a museum ship sitting at a dock,” said Bailey, emphasizing that the *Oliver Hazard Perry*, will be U.S. Coast Guard-certified, under the Sailing School Vessel Regulations, for ocean voyages. “When it is completed, the *Oliver Hazard Perry* will be the second largest sail training ship in America, next to the U.S. Coast Guard's barque *Eagle*.”

Dunbar added that the ship's educational programs would be geared to school students during the winter and fall and community organizations, such as Sail Newport, Save the Bay, and the Providence Community Boating Center, in the summer. TSRI also will coordinate with several groups locally and regionally that are in the business of training professionals at sea.”

“We are very confident that we will have a program that will do the state of Rhode Island proud,” said Dunbar.

For more information on the Oliver Hazard Perry, contact Perry Lewis at the TSRI office, 49B Bowen's Wharf, Newport, R.I., 02840, tel. 401-841-0080, <http://www.tallshipsrhodeisland.org/>

(end)