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TheSailingChannel Grows Sailing Through Mid East Peace Initiative

On Saturday July 31, 2010, TheSailingChannel hosted several college-age Palestinian and Israeli team members from *New Story Leadership for the Middle East* for a daylong sail on the Chesapeake Bay. TheSailingChannel is providing pro bono video production and web hosting services during the program's first year of operation. This summer, NSL brought its initial group of Israeli and Palestinian students to Washington, DC for 6 weeks of leadership training and internships on Capitol Hill. The students hail from Bethlehem, Tel Aviv, Gaza, Jerusalem, and Arava. Five are Palestinian and five are Israeli.



New Story Leadership is a narrative based program specifically designed for young adults. It offers participants the tools to leave their old story of conflict behind and construct a new story of understanding, reconciliation, and partnership for the future. "Team building is a big part of the program and that's where sailing fits in," says Tory Salvia, President of TheSailingChannel and skipper of the host boat, "Sparkle Plenty," a 1980 Mariner 36 (N.H.) sloop.



Docked at Leatherbury Point Marina in Shady Side, MD, Sparkle Plenty sailed out the West River and north to Annapolis with the first crew of four students and two NSL staff aboard. The plan called for the first group to sail to Annapolis while a second group of students and staff drove to Annapolis for a tour of the historic city. The two groups would rendezvous at the Annapolis Yacht Basin where Sparkle Plenty would take on fuel and exchange crews.

Serving as First Mate was Mr. Salvia's longtime sailing friend and fellow skipper, Fred Leyrer. "We lucked out with great weather and moderate breeze that allowed us to sail all the way into Annapolis harbor," reported Leyrer. During the sail all hands took turns at the helm and trimming the rig. For three of the students, this was their first time on the water and their first introduction to sailing. "Everyone was eager to steer, and amazed at how we could move and maneuver by just using the wind," said Salvia. Leyrer, a retired executive, recalled past corporate team

building exercises aboard sailing craft and noted that “This one is a lot more laid back with an emphasis on fun.”

After arriving in Annapolis, three members from the first group voted to stay aboard for the sail back to Shady Side. “The kids were really impressed with Annapolis and the sailing,” noted Paul Costello, Founder of NSL. With a full boat, Sparkle Plenty powered out of the harbor into a freshening southeast breeze. “The ‘veterans’ from the sail up worked with the ‘newbies’ to get them situated,” said Salvia. “Once we cleared Horn Point, we set the sails in 15 knots. With more wind piping up, this really showed the students the fun of Bay sailing.”



The return sail started on a close reach across the bay past anchored freighters. Nearing the Eastern shore, First Mate Leyrer coached the crew in a tack to put Sparkle Plenty on a bearing for Thomas Point Light. “They were having a blast and getting the knack of steering and how to crank the sheet winches,” said Leyrer. Once the boat settled into a groove, three students ventured to the foredeck for some sun and a bit of spray. “When we cut across the large rollers and the bow kicked up some water, you could hear the cheers,” said Elliot Jeffords, American University student and NSL Program Director. “My girl friend is on the AU sailing team and now I know what all the excitement’s about. We’re definitely going to get out here on the Bay together.”

With students taking turns at the helm, Sparkle Plenty enjoyed a “brochure” one-tack sail back to the West River. To cap off the return, the boat sailed into a small cove on the Rhodes River and dropped the hook so the students could take a dip. After a short motor back across the West River into Parish Creek, all hands pitched in for a smooth docking at the marina. The Annapolis group drove up just as Sparkle Plenty eased into her slip, and it was everyone into the cockpit for snacks and refreshments with a perfect sunset over the stern. “Well, we did our bit today for sailing and peace,” said Salvia. “Yup, a two-fer,” said Leyrer, “You can’t do better than that on a sailboat.”



TheSailingChannel has produced ten video stories, one from each member of the NSL team, about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. These personal accounts of daily life, perceptions of “the other side,” and commitments to a new story of progress and peace will give any viewer a fresh look at the Middle East, and hope for the future. To watch the videos, visit www.youtube.com/user/newstoryleadership. For more information about NSL, go to www.newstoryleadership.org.

Next year, NSL hopes to bring twice as many students to Washington, DC. If you live within the DC Metrorail system are interested in being a host family, please contact info@newstoryleadership.org. TheSailingChannel will be recruiting more skippers so we can add more sailing to the program. If you sail in the DC area and are interested in participating, please contact us at the email address below.

[Check out the August 12th, 2010 article about NSL in the Washington Post Style section.](#)

About [TheSailingChannel.TV](#)

TheSailingChannel is a popular web based video & social networking service for cruising sailors. Its productions cover the gear, the people, the boats, the skills, and the places that interest cruisers. TheSailingChannel also co-produces the Public TV series, “*Adventures in Sailing*” with WPBT2 Miami. TSC is seeking sponsors for AIS and more quality sailing videos for distribution. For information e-mail Sailing@TheSailingChannel.TV.

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