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TALL SHIPS

by Paula Hewson

Come Sail Away!

Tall-masted sailing ships first connected the hemispheres and launched our nation. They continue to embody romance, adventure and beauty. Wind power makes them eco-friendly too.

This summer, five SkyWest destinations welcome a unique armada of the vintage vessels during the Great Lakes United Tall Ships Challenge Series. Cleveland, Ohio; Bay City, Michigan near Saginaw; Duluth, Minnesota; Green Bay, Wisconsin and Chicago, Illinois are all part of an event jointly presented by The American Sail Training Association and Great Lakes United, an organization dedicated to protecting the Great Lakes ecosystem. The celebration of our maritime heritage emphasizes education and will bring a total of 20 tall ships from as far away as Germany to the world's largest body of fresh water.

Participating ships vary from port to port. They include schooners and brigantines, brigs and barques. Each has a story. Most are replicas or re-creations operated by non-profits. They serve as touchstones of history and reminders of environmental responsibility. Some are famous. MGM built the HMS *Bounty* replica in 1960 for Marlon Brando's movie *Mutiny on the Bounty*, The *Freedom Schooner Amistad* is a re-creation of the 1839 ship immortalized in Steven Spielberg's *Amistad* and is dedicated to civil rights education.



HMS *Bounty* celebrates her 50th anniversary during her 2010 Great Lakes voyage.

The *Roseway*, a Grand Banks fishing schooner built in 1925, is the oldest featured ship. It will carry student ambassadors on the voyage between Bay City and Duluth. The *S/V Denis Sullivan* is the newest. The Milwaukee-based ship serves as a floating classroom. Completed in 2000, it took more than nine years to build and was created with a team of almost 1,000 volunteers working under the direction of shipwrights. The three-masted, wooden schooner serves as a major Milwaukee summer attraction. It's the flagship of both the state of Wisconsin and the United Nations Environment Program.

Like Milwaukee, Bay City on Saginaw Bay possesses an ongoing commitment to sharing the tall-ship mystique with the public. It owns and operates two topside schooners, *Appledore IV* and *Appledore V*. Both provide a variety of sail-away cruises during the Bay City portion of the sailing series.

The fun wraps up August 24 through 29 in Chicago where all twenty ships will be docked stern to stern for a distance of almost a mile along Navy Pier. Nautical themes dominate other pier attractions during the six-day finale. ■

