

SHIPWATCHER NEWS

TEENS LAUNCH 'CARING FOR OUR SAILORS' PROGRAM, SEEK COMMUNITY HELP

11/5 - Brendan Falkowski, a high school student from Bath, Michigan, and publisher of the on-line bi-monthly Shipwatcher News, has launched a program called "Caring for Our Sailors." The goal is to deliver holiday care packages to as many of the ships as possible.

"We want to serve as many sailors as possible through this program, and have partnered with the S/S Alpena, Grand River Navigation, Interlake Steamship Co., Lower Lakes Towing, Port City Marine Services and VanEnkevort Tug & Barge to provide gifts for over 550 sailors on 29 ships," Falkowski said.

He has been joined by his friend Brock Johnson, a high school student from Grand Rapids, Michigan, who also shares a passion for Great Lakes ships and is a volunteer at the Milwaukee Clipper marine museum, for help on this project. They have been awarded a \$250 grant from Thrivent, as well as a \$50 donation from Costco.

"We plan on filling our care packages with healthy snacks and treats, gum, hot chocolate packets, and more," Falkowski said. "Beyond these items, we also have set up a way for the sailors to register for a chance to win a bonus gift, with chances to win two VIP ferry tickets to Mackinac Island aboard Shepler's Mackinac Island Ferry or an autographed Know Your Ships 2020 book.

"While I have worked through life during the COVID-19 pandemic, I was inspired to do something for the sailors on Great Lakes ships, who spend a month or more at a time on their ships, away from their homes and families. They put in countless hours of work to support their families and keep the economy moving. I thought that they deserved something special this holiday season," Falkowski he added, "and I wanted to share something with them to show them how appreciated their sacrifices are."

The two are working with the J. W. Westcott Co. of Detroit and Soo Marine Supply of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, for delivery of the care packages, both of which have agreed to deliver them for.

Now they are looking for support from the community to give the project a final push. You can find more information on the project at <https://shipwatcher-news.com/caring-for-our-sailors>, and can view and donate to our gift shopping list at https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1ADSMSCU3MDLN?ref=wl_share. If you wish to donate money to our cause, please see the donation form on the Shipwatcher News Caring for our Sailors webpage.

Written by Brendan Falkowski and Roger LeLievre

