



**For Immediate Release**

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**2015 Norfolk Harborfest® presented by AT&T**  
*The Largest, Longest-Running, FREE Maritime Festival in the Nation!*  
Friday, June 5 – Sunday, June 7, 2015 on the Downtown Norfolk Waterfront

NORFOLK, VA – (May 6, 2015) – Norfolk Festevents, Ltd. announces the plan for the **39th Annual Norfolk Harborfest®** Friday, June 5, 2015 – Sunday, June 7, 2015 at Town Point Park along the Downtown Norfolk Waterfront. This free, family-friendly weekend event is filled with three days of both land and sea activities to capture the hearts of all ages! **Festival hours:** Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup> from Noon – 11 pm, Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup> from Noon – 11 pm, and Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup> from Noon – 6 pm.

The long standing tradition of Harborfest® animates the Downtown Norfolk Waterfront with radiant summer excitement as it brings the community together to enjoy the largest, longest-running, and free maritime festival in the Nation. It launches Friday June 5, 2015, with the Parade of Sail and continues with sea activities such as work boat races, emergency vessel demonstrations, and professional Fly Board demonstrations, along with land activities to include regional and national entertainment acts, fun filled family activities, unique and unusual performances, and one of the best waterfront fireworks show on the East Coast!

*28 hours of free national entertainment, unique and specialty performances and water events!*

*More than 300 ships and vessels!*

*8 mile majestic parade of sail!*

*30 bold and creative cuisine locations!*

*25 unique pop-up retail businesses!*

*Over 2,262 feet of amazing ship decks to explore!*

**Tall Ships, Ship Tours, Parade of Sail, Boater Information, and Docking...**  
**2015 Harborfest® Parade of Sail, Presented by WVEC 13 News Now**

The spectacular **Harborfest® Parade of Sail**, under the direction of the Virginia Pilots Association and led by USCG *Eagle*, will enter the Downtown Norfolk Harbor on Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at noon. Following tradition, this impressive fleet will include tall ships, Navy ships, character vessels, sleek power cruisers, sailing craft, antique and classic wooden boats, military vessels, tugs and more! Thousands of onlookers stationed at vantage points along the Elizabeth River will be able to witness this expansive fleet as it dances down the river towards Town Point Park.

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**The following is a list of visiting tall ships, Navy ships, and character vessels:**

- **USS MITSCHER: US Navy Destroyer: Home Port: Norfolk, Virginia**



The USS *Mitscher* was commissioned on December 10, 1994, transferred to her homeport in Norfolk, Virginia and has since made many Mediterranean deployments and participated in many Caribbean exercises. In 2001, the USS *Mitscher* deployed with the carrier battle group centered on *Harry S. Truman* (CVN-75). During this deployment, USS *Mitscher* visited Algiers, Algeria and conducted joint training exercises with the Algerian Navy.

On 16 February 2007, USS *Mitscher* was awarded the 2006 Battle "E" award.

Beginning July 23, 2011, during its 2011 deployment, the strike group's anti-piracy capabilities was augmented by the addition of a U.S. Coast Guard 12-person Advanced Interdiction Team (AIT) embarked aboard the USS *Mitscher*. These deployable Coast Guard boarding teams consisted of highly trained maritime law enforcement specialists capable of Level III non-compliant boardings. As the only organization in the U.S. government with the combined authority of a law enforcement agency, an intelligence agency, and a military service, they brought additional capabilities and expertise to *Mitscher's* embarked visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) team. The USS *Mitscher's* VBSS team and the AIT trained together between operations to enhance their joint boarding tactics, boat operation skills, and internal movements.

### **Facts & History: USS Mitscher**

- On February 24, 2012, Commander Monika W. Stoker became the first African-American female to become the Commanding Officer of a United States Warship.
- 30 Knots
- Height: 66
- Length: 505'
- A permanent crew of 33 officers, 38 petty officers, and 210 enlisted personnel

- **USCGC EAGLE: USA**



The majestic sailing ship, the Coast Guard Cutter *Eagle*, provides USCG Academy cadets and officer candidates with their first taste of sea and salt air. Built in Germany in 1936 and re-commissioned by the United States at the close of World War II, the *Eagle* is the largest tall ship flying the Stars and Stripes.

*Eagle's* home port is New London, Conn., on the Thames River at the U. S. Coast Guard Academy. The *Eagle's* primary mission is training for cadets and officer candidates. However, the Coast Guard accommodates requests for a limited number of port visits each year, when these do not interfere with the cutter's primary training mission.

To maneuver *Eagle* under sail, the crew must handle more than 22,000 square feet of sail and five miles of rigging. Over 200 lines control the sails and yards, and every crew-member, cadet and officer candidate, must become intimately familiar with the name, operation, and function of each line.

### **Facts & History: USCGC Eagle**

- USCGC *Eagle* is the sixth U.S. Coast Guard cutter to bear the name in a proud line dating back to 1792. The ship was built in 1936 by the Blohm and Voss Shipyard in Hamburg, Germany, and commissioned as *Horst Wessel*. (Five identical sister ships were also built.)
- Speed under full sail: 17 knots
- Height: 147.3'
- Length: 295'
- A permanent crew of six officers and 55 enlisted personnel

- **CISNE BRANCO: BRAZIL**



*Cisne Branco* is scheduled to arrive at noon as part of the Friday, June 5, 2015 Parade of Sail, and will dock at the Otter Berth next to Waterside. The *Cisne Branco*'s last visit to Norfolk was in June of 2012 as part of the OpSail2012 Virginia fleet. The ship will depart on **Thursday, June 11, 2015**. The City of Norfolk is the only US port call for the ship's 2015 tour.

Ship tours are **free and open to the public**.

**CISNE BRANCO Public Tour Times (subject to change):**

Friday, June 5, 2015 – 2 pm – 6 pm  
Saturday, June 6, 2015 – 12 pm – 6 pm  
Sunday, June 7, 2015 – 12 pm – 6 pm  
Monday, June 8, 2015 – 10 am – 6 pm  
Tuesday, June 9, 2015 – 10 am – 6 pm  
Wednesday, June 10, 2015 – 10 am – 6 pm  
Thursday, June 11, 2015 Departure

*Cisne Branco* is home based in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Her design goes back to the height of the great age of sail in the second half of the 19th century, and she trains midshipmen from the Brazilian Navy in navigation, seamanship, and watch-standing skills. Commanding Officer Nelson Nenes da Rosa and the rest of the 60 crew members onboard sail and maintain this ambassador vessel. *Cisne Branco* travels the world to showcase Brazilian culture and industry.

**Facts & History: CISNE BRANCO**

- One of the youngest ships in the international tall ship fleet, CISNE BRANCO was built in Amsterdam in 2000. Her name means "white swan," and she is the third Brazilian Navy training ship to carry that name, but this CISNE BRANCO is very different from the first one. The first CISNE BRANCO was a 79-foot-long wooden yacht designed by the legendary Alfred Mylne.
- Overall Length: 249 ft
- Rig: Barque
- Height: 152'
- 60 Officers and crew members total permanently assigned to the ship

- **Kalmar Nyckel: 141’, 3 Masted tall ship:** Home Port: Wilmington, DE



The *Kalmar Nyckel* is a full-scale re-creation of the original 17<sup>th</sup> century ship, whose historic significance rivals that of the Mayflower. The present day Kalmar Nyckel serves as the Delaware region’s floating Academy and Good will Ambassador.

The original *Kalmar Nyckel* served as Governor Peter Minuit’s flagship for the 1638 expedition that founded the colony of New Sweden, establishing the first permanent European settlement in the Delaware Valley, Fort Christina, in present-day Wilmington, Delaware. She would make a total of four roundtrip crossings of the Atlantic, more than any other documented ship of the American colonial era.

The original Kalmar Nyckel was built by the Dutch in or about 1625 as a “Pinnacle”-a class of vessels that could operate either as small war ships or as armed merchantmen. This was the “Golden Age” of Dutch naval power and seaborne world trade, and the Dutch were the most advanced naval architects and shipbuilders of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Measuring 93 feet on deck and with a sparred length of 141 feet, she is stoutly built and remarkably seaworthy, characteristic that would serve her well throughout her long and remarkable career. Her original armament probably consisted of 12 six-pounder cast iron cannons, with two smaller swivel guns attached to the quarterdeck rails.

- **SAND TIGER NOAA: 90’ Research Vessel:** Home Port: Norfolk, Virginia
- **AMERICAN ROVER: 135’, 3 Masted Topsail Schooner:** Home Port: Norfolk, Virginia
- **BONNY ROVER: 50’, 2 Masted Rover:** Home Port: Norfolk, Virginia
- **USS WISCONSIN:** The USS Wisconsin is an Iowa-class battleship located steps away from Town Point Park in Whisky Basin at Nauticus. She will be open for tours throughout the weekend.

**Ship Tours:** Ships will be open for public tours on Friday following the Harborfest® Parade of Sail, Saturday June 7 and Sunday June 8 public tours will be from 12pm – 6pm. Visitors are requested to wear flat shoes and be able to manage walking up and down access ramps and ladders. Strollers must be left on the dock. Strollers are not permitted on board the ship. Entry and Exit Ramps are not equipped to accommodate wheel chairs, walkers, or other types of mobility equipment requiring a flat and solid surface or hard hand rails.

Please visit [www.festevents.org](http://www.festevents.org) for a schedule of visitation times.

**Public Docking:** All docking on the Downtown Norfolk Waterfront is on a reservation basis only, except for short-term dinghy docking at designated locations on the Norfolk waterfront. Time limits (no overnight docking) and size (16' or smaller) limits apply.

- Docking in the Hospital Point Anchorage in the Elizabeth River across from Town Point Park will be free of charge and available on a first come, first serve basis.
- A water taxi service will be available for boaters at anchorage with transportation to both the Norfolk and Portsmouth Downtown Waterfronts. Rates of the day will apply.

### Norfolk Harborfest® Water Events Schedule 2015 (Subject to change)

#### Friday, June 5

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 12:00-1:00 pm | Parade of Sail & Docking  |
| 1:30-2:00 pm  | Maritime Incident Response Team Vessel Boat Demo                  |
| 2:00-2:30 pm  | US Navy Coastal Riverine Delta Company Group Two Squadron Tw Demo |
| 2:30-3:00 pm  | Miami Fly Board Demo  |
| 3:00-6:00 pm  | Public Visitation aboard tall ships and character vessels         |
| 4:00-4:30 pm  | SAR Demo – United States Coast Guard                              |
| 4:30-5:00 pm  | Miami Fly Board Demo  |
| 6:00-6:30 pm  | Miami Fly Board Demo  |

#### Saturday, June 6

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 12:00-6:00 pm | Public Visitation aboard tall ships and character vessels |
| 12:30-1:00 pm | Miami Fly Board Demo                                      |
| 1:45-2:15 pm  | SAR Demo – United States Coast Guard                      |
| 2:30-3:30 pm  | Chesapeake Bay Workboat Parade                            |
| 3:30-4:00 pm  | Miami Fly Board Demo                                      |
| 4:30-5:30 pm  | Elizabeth River Tug Muster                                |
| 6:30-7:00 pm  | Miami Fly Board Demo                                      |
| 9:30 pm       | <b>FIREWORKS!!</b>  |

#### Sunday, June 8

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 11:30-12:00 pm | Miami Fly Board Demo   |
| 11:45-12:30 pm | Chesapeake Bay Workboats Rally for Races                           |
| 12:00-6:00 pm  | Public Visitation aboard tall ships and character vessels          |
| 12:30-1:30 pm  | Chesapeake Bay Workboat Race                                       |
| 1:30-2:00 pm   | US Navy Coastal Riverine Delta Company Group Two Squadron Two Demo |
| 2:30-3:00 pm   | Miami Fly Board Demo   |
| 3:30-4:15 pm   | Ultimate Build a Boat Race   |
| 5:00-5:30 pm   | Miami Fly Board Demo   |



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### **31st Annual Chesapeake Bay Workboat Parade and Races**

For over a century the Chesapeake Bay workboats have been used as transportation to and from the waters where these men make their living. The Chesapeake Bay Workboats are the official Virginia State Boats. Because of the decline in the seafood industry, the Chesapeake Bay waters that once flourished with these beautiful handmade boats has become a scarce sight. The Chesapeake Bay Workboat Parade on Saturday, June 6 at 2:30pm highlights the creative decorating skills of the Watermen and their families as they dress their clam boats, crab boats and oyster boats to the “T” for this great family showcase! Be sure to come back on Sunday, June 7 at noon to witness the power (450 Horsepower) of these boats as they race down the Elizabeth River. The Chesapeake Bay Workboat Race at Harborfest® is an event that the Watermen prepare for all year long. The races are serious competitions that allow the heat winners a full year of bragging rights.

### **Elizabeth River Tug Muster**

The muscle men of the harbor bring their tugboats out for an all-out demonstration of power and agility in the popular Tug Muster Saturday, June 6 at 4:30pm in the Elizabeth River. This “bragging-rights” competition will get your heart racing as the tugs dance in the river and show off their skills!

**NEW! Miami Fly Boards** – Check out the newest extreme sport to hit the water! Keep your eyes on the Elizabeth River and take in this exciting new Fly Board propulsion through air and water by world class professional Fly Board riders providing three shows each day.

### **Ultimate Build-a-Boat, Boat Building Contest and Race**

The very popular and zany Ultimate Build a Boat Challenge begins on Saturday, June 6, when teams construct boats from scratch in various engineering and decorative designs in the hope that their design will survive the test of Sunday’s Ultimate Build a Boat Race! Sunday, June 7 at 4:00pm, the competing teams place their boats, and boating skills to the test with an all-out race to the finish line! This nail- biting event is one not to be missed!

**Harborfest® Fireworks Display, Presented by Wavy TV10:** The Harborfest® Fireworks Display, produced by Pyro Shows of Tennessee, is one of the largest waterfront pyrotechnics show on the East Coast. Be prepared for the unexpected as the sky is filled with an explosive display of light synchronized to a booming musical score. The show is scheduled for Saturday night at 9:30 pm and fired from a barge in the Elizabeth River.

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## The Music of Harborfest®

### Main Stage

#### Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>

6:00 pm

Mingo Fishtrap (Soul/Funk Band)

8:45 pm

Robert Randolph & The Family Band (Soul/Funk Band)

#### Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup>

3:30 pm

Sister Sparrow & the Dirty Birds (Soul/Rock Band)

5:45 pm

Good Old War (Indie Folk)

8:00 pm

Morris Day & the Time (Funk Rock)

#### Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>

2:00 pm

Delta Rae (Folk Rock)

4:30 pm

Plain White T's (Alternative)

### Boathouse Stage

#### Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>

12:45 pm

Mountaintide (Soulfolk)

2:45 pm

Jesse Chong (Funk Rock)

5:00 pm

Dyska (Indie Rock)

7:15 pm

Parker Millsap (Indie)

10:00 pm

Major & the Monbacks (Rock/Soul)

#### Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup>

12:30 pm

Joe Gosman Band (Rock/Alternative)

2:15 pm

Skye Zentz (Folk/Soul)

4:30 pm

Jake Hull & the Great Victory (Folk/Rock)

6:45 pm

Wild Adriatic (Rock/Soul)

10:00 pm

DJ CanRock (Local Area DJ)

#### Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>

12:30 pm

Anthony Rosano & the Conqueroos (Indie Blues)

3:15 pm

Scythian (Celtic Rock)



## **The Back Deck Stage**

(TowneBank Fountain Park)

### **Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>**

|          |                                      |
|----------|--------------------------------------|
| 12:00 pm | Skip Friel (New Folk)                |
| 2:00 pm  | First World Problems (Acoustic Rock) |
| 4:00 pm  | Narissa Bond (Folk/Jazz/Blues)       |
| 6:00 pm  | Brian Allard Duo (Jazz/Rock/Blues)   |
| 8:00 pm  | Jacob Vanko Band (Blues)             |

### **Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup>**

|          |                               |
|----------|-------------------------------|
| 12:00 pm | Swell Luck (Acoustic Rock)    |
| 2:00 pm  | Ray Meeks (Rock)              |
| 4:00 pm  | Brian Sewell (Acoustic Rock)  |
| 6:00 pm  | Lewis McGehee (Acoustic Rock) |
| 8:00 pm  | Mike Proffitt (Acoustic Rock) |

### **Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>**

|          |                               |
|----------|-------------------------------|
| 12:00 pm | Kelsie McNair (Indie Folk)    |
| 2:00 pm  | Amy Gerhartz (Rock/Folk)      |
| 4:00 pm  | Brandon Bower (Acoustic Rock) |

## **What's NEW at Harborfest® 2015!**

### **NEW! Virginia Wine and Beer Tasting Area** – Craft Beer and Virginia Wine Tasting

The Made in Virginia Wine Tasting will feature wine sampling from Mermaid Winery, Rockbridge Vineyards and other Virginia wineries as well as craft beers from Virginia and more! Wines will be available by the glass, bottle and case. Craft beers will be available to purchase in sample sizes or by the pint. Join us for a unique experience sampling some of Virginia's finest beer and wine with live music from The Back Deck stage.

**Returning in 2015 with new flavor**, Culinary Advisor, renowned chef, food writer, historian, Patrick Evans-Hylton has a secret to share - **We've Got a Crush on Virginia**. In addition to an amazing wine and beer scene, the state is going gangbusters with distilled spirits. We celebrate those innovations in a most delicious way, with the festival's craft-it-yourself Crush Cocktail Club.

It's easy, and delicious. Patrick Evans-Hylton will be onsite to assist in the creation. Each guest will receive a mason jar with crushed ice and from there; it is up to the individual palette to fill it with a variety of hand-selected juices, garnish and toppings from classic to crazy. It's a great way to toast Virginia and the start of the summer season.



**NEW! Navy Stewards of the Sea** - Visit Stewie, the friendly environmental turtle, and learn about Navy Environmental and Energy Programs. Find out how Sailors safeguard whales, protect the environment and use biofuels for ships and aircraft. Hear and see whales and dolphins common to our Virginia waters with interactive touch screens. Guests will learn how the Navy helps the ancient Atlantic Sturgeon in the Chesapeake Bay and creates oyster reefs in the Atlantic Ocean.

**NEW! Red Trousers Show** – Don't miss this brilliant street theater! 30 minute shows will take place 3 times a day adjacent to Cabana Land. Watch and be amazed by this spectacular and unique duo of Acrobats as they flip and fly through the air with ease.

**NEW! The Real Mermaids!** Watch as the curtains open to reveal ancient spirits of the deep, creatures thought to exist only in the shimmering mirage of the open ocean. Spotted by sailors for thousands of years in the breaking waves of their ships, these illusive beauties are now brought to you from the far corners of the earth. Their mystical songs will reveal stories of old that will warm the hearts and enchant the souls of all who dare to listen. Return to an age of magic, where myth blurs with reality and witness the real life mermaids. The Mermaids will be appearing every hour on the hour until sunset throughout the weekend.

**NEW! The World's Largest Potato-** Be sure to check out the world's largest potato on wheels which embarked on its fourth cross-country tour to new cities, traveling 22,087 miles and helping dozens of charities better serve their communities. It began in 2012 as a one-year campaign to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Idaho Potato Commission and became quickly apparent with its success that it would be more than a one-year occurrence; it literally became a big piece of pop-culture.

## **Sunday Family Funday!**

**On Sunday, June 7, from 10am-2pm**, join us as we celebrate the families of Hampton Roads during this exclusive time at Harborfest®!

**ALL ABOARD** the Town Point Express! Enjoy **FREE** train rides throughout Town Point Park on this one of a kind caboose!

Have steam to blow off? Jump inside our three bounce houses... themed with all of your favorite characters!

Get your face painted at the Pic-N-Paint station to enhance your festival experience!

## **Other Festival Features include....**

**Boardwalk Arcade** – The festival favorite is back in 2015 with more classic boardwalk games like Pacman, Skee Ball and more, all completely free to play for all festival guests!

**Cabana Land and Hammock Hangout** - With so many awesome things to see and things to do, it is easy to get a little tuckered out at Harborfest®. That's why you can't miss Cabana Land and the Hammock Hangout; your perfect excuse to kick back and relax during the festival weekend while still being in the center of the action.

**Pirate Bandana Making and Moody Crewe Pirate School** – Craft yourself the appropriate swashbuckling attire at the Pirate Bandana Tent and then set sail into a class at the Moody Crewe Pirate School where you will learn how to live the shipshape pirate’s life ... Yo Ho Yo Ho a pirate’s life for me!

**Pirate School for Little Scallywags –ARRRGH!** Lessons in the art of Pirating will be taught by **The Pirates of the Moody Crewe** with special guest appearances by **Blackbeard**. Left your Pirate gear on the ship? Create your own colorful pirate bandana with Joanne from the **Art Barrage**.

### **Radio Harborfest**

Broadcasting live at Norfolk Harborfest®, local radio celebrity Paul Shugrue of WHRV hosts “Radio Harborfest”, keeping you updated on the latest festival happenings including weather, traffic, entertainment and anything else Harborfest® throughout the weekend.

### **HFTV**

Watch all of your favorite national performances live on the larger-than life big screen TV. Located adjacent to the Main Stage, the giant video wall will be broadcasting national performances, the Parade of Sail, the Fireworks Show and many other great Harborfest® traditions throughout the weekend.

## **Shopping at Harborfest®**

**Harborfest Gift Shop:** Harborfest® souvenir merchandise is available at all on-site Festival Gift Shops. The Harborfest® merchandise line offers a variety of pieces designed to suit a variety of tastes. From official t-shirts to warm fleece for cool evenings, the Harborfest® retail line offers visitors a high level of comfort and quality as well as the chance to bring a piece of Harborfest® home. You can also visit the Gift Shop after the Festival at <http://www.festevents.org>.

**Harborfest Town Point Market** is a unique shopping experience you won’t find at a mall! Merchant sales items include Wearable’s like T-shirts, tropical sundresses, handmade clothing, polo shirts and fleece items; Accessories & Novelties like handmade jewelry, pearls, exotic stones, costume jewelry, sterling silver, handbags, leather accessories, sunglasses, hair ribbons, cigars, umbrellas and sea grass hats; Art including hand blown glass, wood bowls, repurposed art, prints, pottery and wood carved home décor; and Food including cupcakes, gourmet peanuts and flavored popcorn.

## **Dining At Harborfest®... Fresh & Fun**

The Harborfest®, food and beverage theme is fresh and fun! Outdoor dining on the waterfront includes over 50 food and beverage scenes, serving fill-your-tummy delicacies including fresh crab cakes, hand breaded shrimp, fried oysters, scallops, shrimp fried rice, mouth-watering open pit beef barbeque, North Carolina barbeque, Italian sausage, Polish sausage, Philly style cheese steaks, burgers and dogs, souvlaki, pitas, gyros, chicken on a stick, chicken tenders, Grecian chicken, chicken lo mein, Greek salad, buttery roasted corn, fresh cut French fries, onion rings, fresh wraps, corn dogs, blooming onions and smoked savory turkey legs. Top off your lunch or dinner with ice cold lemonade and sweet desserts like hand dipped ice cream, fresh and hot funnel cakes, cool Italian ices, melt-in-your-mouth Kettle Korn, fresh fruit smoothies and soft serve ice cream with all the toppings. Lounge with family and friends at one of our shaded seating areas and relax while enjoying your favorite festival fare. In addition to traditional beverage selections like smoothies and lemonade, adult beverages may be found throughout the festival grounds in various locations.

## 39th Annual AT&T Norfolk Harborfest® Commemorative Poster:



While receiving many artist applications from all around the country for the coveted honor of creating the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Norfolk Harborfest® poster, William Bensen was the shining star whose talent and story caught everyone's attention. Husband and father of two, Bensen was able to capture the beauty and serenity of the vibrant downtown Norfolk waterfront and create what is sure to be one of the best pieces of artwork that Harborfest® has yet seen.

"It's a great honor to be this year's artist for the 2015 Harborfest Poster. Harborfest is one of the biggest events hosted by the Tidewater area and to be considered worthy enough to do this is a humbling experience." He calls the painting "The Biggest Block Party In Town." This is not his first time doing a poster. In 2010 he did the Harborfest® poster which won a bronze at the IFEA Pinnacle Awards. The Pinnacle Awards recognizes outstanding accomplishments and top quality creative, promotional, operational and community outreach programs and materials produced by festivals and events around the world. The award is given annually by the IFEA, the International Festivals & Events Association.

"It's a good arrangement working with Norfolk Festevents, the company that produces Harborfest®. Dominick Fini, (Vice President of Sales and Marketing) and Karen Scherberger, (Chief Executive Officer) know what they want. I mean, they've been working at this for 39 years so of course they know what they're after. But they gave me, and I assume the other poster artists, opportunities to pitch different approaches which they are open to and which happened in this case. It means a lot to an artist to do that." Bensen said on working with Norfolk Festevents on the commemorative poster.

Bensen's interest in art developed as a young child, surrounded by a family of artists. His grandfather was an artisan at the turn of the 20th century with clients such as Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, the Posts, the Huttons, and the Vanderbilts. Grandfather Bensen's designs graced landmarks such as Mar-A-Lago, the Biltmore estate, and American embassies throughout Europe. Bensen's father sculpted iron into creative furniture forms. His uncle was a photographer and an early cinematographer who captured images of Shirley Temple and other notables.

Long inspired by N.C. Wyeth, John Singer Sargent, Joaquin Sorolla, and Anders Zorn, many of Bensen's canvases capture solitude and the play of light upon nature. Bensen states, "I am drawn to nature. Not just the nature that lies around us, but also the nature that lies within. Strength. Solitude. Tranquility. The simple, yet complex paths that weave through life. Colors that reflect our souls. Nature is the stage that connects us."

Bensen and his wife were married in Risor, Norway, and currently reside in Virginia with their young twins. William and his wife often travel within the U.S. and other world regions - which allow them the opportunity to gather new subject material for William's art.

Please continue to visit [www.festevents.org](http://www.festevents.org) for regular updates!

The 39th Annual Norfolk Harborfest® presented by AT&T, is produced by Norfolk Festevents and the City of Norfolk. Sponsored by: W.F. Magann Corporation, Norfolk Waterside Marriott, Lumos Networks, Miller Lite, Southern Auto Group, Pepsi, Spirit of Norfolk, Lipton, and Crofton Industries.

For more information on Norfolk Harborfest® as well as other events throughout the year, including hours, park regulations and parking please visit [www.festevents.org](http://www.festevents.org) or call 757.441.2345.

Norfolk Festevents, Ltd., based in Norfolk, Virginia, is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating the most dynamic urban waterfront community in America through innovative programming and imaginative uses of its historic waterfront spaces. An extensive 10 month schedule of diverse outdoor cultural events, festivals, concerts, entertainment, holiday programs, tall ship visits, sports and recreation are presented in two popular and welcoming waterfront environments—Town Point Park located in downtown Norfolk on the banks of the Elizabeth River and Ocean View Beach Park situated on the shore line of the Chesapeake Bay. Norfolk Festevents has served as the City of Norfolk's official event marketing agency since the city's downtown waterfront revitalization initiatives began in 1982. The organization has garnered international acclaim for its advocacy for public access to waterfronts, outstanding quality programming, and development of public spaces, transforming Norfolk into one of the most progressive, fun, and livable waterfront communities in the country.

###