

Young sailors are tested in 'Morning Light' film

By Kelsey McDonough

Five hundred and twenty-eight entries. Fifteen spots. Exactly 513 young and talented sailors would not get the chance to see Hawaii. The 15 that did, however, would be in for an adventure of a lifetime.

These are the statistics of the application process for the Morning Light Project, a documentary produced by Roy E. Disney and Leslie DeMeuse.

Thomas J. Pollack originally conceived the idea after the conclusion of the 2005 TransPacific Race. This race is one of the most celebrated big boat sailing competitions in the world, starting in Los Angeles and ending in Hawaii, and covering 2,500 miles of open ocean.

Disney and DeMeuse decided to take 15 young sailors and put them to the test with six months of training, ending with the Trans-Pacific race. "We're not making a film about sailboat racing and we're not making a film about a boat," said producer Roy E. Disney. "It's a story about a group of young adults sailing across an

ocean, the obstacles they encounter and the bonds they form. It's a story about becoming more than the sum of the parts."

Disney himself is an avid sailor, having competed in the TransPacific race a total of sixteen times. His best finish was a first place in 1999. DeMeuse also has some experience in off-shore racing, and sailed the TransPacific for the first time when she was only 16.

Although both producers have had some experience on the water, they really aimed to "make a movie with universal appeal, a movie they could relate to," said Morgan Sackett, another producer.

From the original 528 entries, the producers selected 30 candidates to try out for the movie in California. For seven days the candidates were put to the test on several Catalina 37s by racing on short courses, changing position, and working alongside other sail-

ors they barely knew.

At the end of the trying process, 15 were picked, and among them were Jesse Fielding, from North Kingstown, Charlie Enright, from Bristol, and Robbie Kane, from

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Fairfield, Connecticut. Both Jesse Fielding and Robbie Kane are current students, and coincidentally roommates, at the University of Rhode Island. Charlie Enright graduated from Brown University and is now employed with North Sails. Each recalled that sailing on Morning Light was incredibly special, and they were "very fortunate

for the entire experience," according to Fielding.

One of the most incredible things about working on the Morning Light was the close companionship among the sailors, according to trio. "It's rare that you find a group of 15 young men and women aged 18 to 23 who spend every moment together, 24 hours a day, and still manage to be best friends," said Fielding.

However, when asked what one of the hardest parts of the entire experience was, each said that selecting the final eleven members to sail the TransPac race, from the original 15, was the most difficult. Without any help from coaches or the producers, the 15 sailors decided amongst themselves who would go out to sea, and who would stay on land. The four sailors who remained became alternates. "We put our lives on hold for this; school, our jobs. It was a huge commitment. And not being part

of the final team, that must have been so difficult for those four," said Kane.


Disney and DeMeuse accomplished what they had set out to do; create a movie that appealed to a mass audience rather than just a group of sailors.

When the Morning Light Project opens, even the landlubbers will be excited. A movie that highlights the trials of transoceanic sailboat racing, it also demonstrates the companionship, character, and skill of 15 young sailors over six months. The intensity and, sometimes, frustration, is translated directly to the viewer. According to Kane, when you watch the movie, "you become the sixteenth member of the team, minus the seasickness."

Each of these sailors used every ounce of skill and character that they had to complete the race, but to see how it ends viewers will have to see it on the big screen.

The Morning Light Project premieres nationally in theaters on Friday, Oct. 17.

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OPEN LETTER

to
Jamestown Residents

Dear Neighbor,

I am truly honored to have served you in the House of Representatives. Representing you for the last six years, I can appreciate the needs of the Jamestown community from the necessity of water resource protection, stabilizing property taxes while providing quality public services to creating a practical yet sensible development plan. I have listened to your concerns and have, whenever possible, included them in legislation.

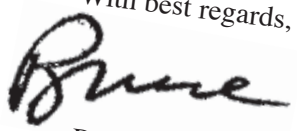
I have been a fighter on the last several budgets because government spending is out of control. The state budgets have been balanced using one time gimmicks such as the future tobacco settlement money, the federal bailout money and totally eliminating a once thriving state revenue surplus. Now more than ever the state needs to balance its spending. If the citizens of our state are to prosper then we need to hold down government spending on the state level, decrease the overall tax burden and create better jobs in our state.

The General Assembly needs to support more revenues to the local cities and towns to offset property taxes. Seniors are the most vulnerable because they often are living on a fixed income while property taxes have soared. I worked with the Jamestown delegation by calling for public hearings and citizen input to implement the E-ZPass system. Cumulative impact legislation has begun to help Jamestown protect their well water. Renewable energy legislation will benefit Jamestown in it's quest for energy self-reliance


These are only a few of the issues that I have been working on but there are others such as adding a Jamestown seat to the Quonset Development Corporation, removing unfunded mandates from our education system, promoting open space bond issues, and leading the charge to oppose liquefied natural gas facilities in our bay.

I learned important life lessons from my parents; serve your community with honor and bring your best self to everything you do. I have tried to make this my motto. I want to thank you not only for allowing me to represent you, but for taking the time to get involved in the process. Together we can make Jamestown an even better place to live.

I am hopeful to reach out to you again this year by visiting you at your door step. However, if our paths do not cross, please contact me with your concerns at 423-0700 or email: repbruce74@aol.com.

With best regards,

Bruce J. Long

"People Above Politics."



Rep. Long has been endorsed by the Sierra Club.