

Sailing school offers summer fun

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There's fun in the sun this summer on the waters of Georgian Bay at the Parry Sound Sailing School. The school is now accepting registrations for classes for children and youth between the ages of 7 and 18 to be held in July and August at Waubuno Beach Park.

Novice sailors are encouraged to register early, says the school's director Larry Woolner. Last year's school, operated entirely by volunteers from Sail Parry Sound Inc., was a sellout. Some 150 children enrolled in last year's school to experience the joy of sailing in a location ideally suited to their safety.

The sailing school also offers the Canadian Yachting Association's instructors training to youth 15 to 18 years. At 16 years, these youth may become part of the school's team of paid instructors. Adult sailing instruction will also be available on request as the school has access to boats ranging from 16-foot day sailboats to 30-foot cruisers. There will also be weekly fun races in the evening for adults and their children.

This year, more boats have been added to the school's fleet, including bigger boats so that last year's students can move up to higher levels of proficiency.

The sailing school is introducing children to a new sport and a way to enjoy this area's natural surroundings, says Woolner.

Sailing teaches children valuable lessons in boating safety, responsibility, leadership and teamwork, and develops personal confidence and a care for the environment.

Last year's instructors are returning to Parry Sound. Tim Searle of Caledon, a Canadian Yachting Association Blue level instructor, will give classroom and on-the-water instruction. He will be assisted by Alison Davies and Victoria Wallace of Scotland, who are Optimist Squad members and Royal Yachting Association instructors. They have sailed on their national team.

The "White Sail" level classes are designed to teach children to sail, whether or not they have any previous sailing experience. "Bronze Sail" level classes are for children who have their "White Sail" level and want to advance their skill.

Students who achieve the "Bronze Sail" level may begin training to become an instructor.

The classes will run Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. throughout July and August. The courses are progressive and several levels can be obtained over the summer. Each level is a prerequisite for the next.

Each student is presented with a certificate from the Canadian Yachting Association upon successful completion of their program.

Registrants must be able to swim and they must bring their own approved life jackets, a lunch and sun protection. Learning materials are included in the fee and boats will be provided. Students may bring their own boats if these are approved by the instructor.

The sailing school is a division of Sail Parry Sound Inc. Formed in 1998, it is dedicated to providing sailing instruction to Parry Sound children, seniors and the differently-abled.

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