

American Littoral Society News Release
Contact: Helen Henderson 732.575.5701

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For Immediate Release

American Littoral Society Introduces "BARNEGAT BAY GUARDIAN" Program

POINT PLEASANT— At an Earth Day Press event in Point Pleasant, the American Littoral Society introduced the Barnegat Bay Guardian to launch their new program that will strengthen the Society's already robust efforts to protect and preserve Barnegat Bay.

Al Wutkowski a lifelong resident of Point Pleasant will be putting his eyes, ears, voice as well as his boat to work for the Society and the Bay.

"Big Al Wutkowski" developed a love of boating and fishing when he was just a young boy. He is best known for his prowess as a striped bass fisherman and his passion for protecting bay wildlife, especially waterfowl. Wutkowski works closely with the Mercer County Wildlife Center and has personally saved over 30 birds that were victims of oil coating and other injuries sustained in the Barnegat Bay.

Al approached the Society to volunteer because of his displeasure with what he has seen happening to the Bay in recent times. "I am tired of what I have been witnessing: Oiled up birds, every other day a diesel fuel slick going by my home, a noticeable loss of weak fish, unattended crab traps and fishing pole lines that harm wildlife and other offenses to the bay like the dumping of trash and debris in the water," he said.

Helen Henderson, Policy Advocate for the Society stated that the Barnegat Bay Guardian program will empower more individuals, especially boaters, to make better decisions that will protect the Bay. "Having someone as passionate as Al out on the water will raise people's awareness about what might harm the Bay and its wildlife while they are enjoying the Bay. He will work to help people understand the consequences of their actions, some of which may be prohibited activities such as the discharge of wastewater. Sometimes people just don't know any better. They need to be educated," she said.

In his volunteer role, Wutkowski will educate the boating community about the Bay and the issues facing it including the Bay's status as a No Discharge Zone. He'll provide information about the location of pump out facilities and educate about wildlife, wildlife protection and marsh protection. In his watchdog role, he'll work to inform the appropriate authorities about illegal or damaging boating activity in the vicinity of marshes and conservation areas. He'll watch for and report pollution, algal blooms and other problems on the Bay and monitor for unpermitted coastal development and work with local and state authorities. Finally, he'll work to help scientists, citizens involved in restoration projects and decision makers gain access to bay.

About the American Littoral Society

The American Littoral Society is a coastal conservation, non-profit organization headquartered on Sandy Hook in Highlands, NJ. Now celebrating its 50th year, the Society promotes the study and conservation of coastal wildlife and habitat, defends the coast from harm and empowers others to do the same. To learn more about the Society and its work, visit www.littoralsociety.org.

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