

KIDS PIRATE DAY - Updated November 2017

Gerry Beltgens, Lead Pirate

Kids Pirate Day had between 2,000 and 3,000 attendees and over 50 volunteers at the Ladysmith Community Marina event. This success was due to several months of event committee planning and collaboration between the volunteers and staff of Ladysmith Maritime Society, Rotary, Kinsmen, and the town of Ladysmith, with the support of many of the businesses and community organisations in town.



Pirates Walk - June 2

Captain Jack and Miss Scarlett arrived at the Aggie Hall for a visit to LaFF. Children, parents and volunteers surrounded the pirates who sat for photos, hugs and stories. A big shout out to Jacquie Nelligan for her amazing LaFF team.

Next the Pirates visited businesses in town who supported the event by displaying posters, dressing windows and setting up displays. First stop was the the 49th Parallel Store. Other stops included the offices of Take 5 Magazine, Pemberton Holmes Real Estate, Little Otter Kids Consignment, Left Coast Fashions, Little Rascals Pet Supplies, Old Town Bakery (because bakery), Salamander Books (always the best display), Royal Bank (\$1,000 donation for lifejackets and RBC staff volunteers on site) and the Wild Poppy Restaurant (because awesome). Next year we would like to get more businesses involved and hopefully we can help drive more business to the town.

Swarmed at the Primary School

At lunchtime we headed to the Ladysmith Primary School where we were met by 240 screaming Pirate Fans. The pirates handed out posters, and signed autographs on the posters, arms, hands and foreheads. Sorry parents but at least this year we used washable markers instead of sharpies. Principal Bob Brooks attended to make sure that none of his charges ended up as crew on a pirate ship.

Pirate's Feast on the Dock

Friday evening was the first annual "Pirates Feast" themed Dine on the Dock at the Ladysmith Community Marina. It was sold out and this pirate was almost unable to get a

ticket! This pirate called out the majority of people who were not dressed in pirates gear. It was either walk the plank or make a donation to Rotary's Disaster Aid Charity.

Kids Pirate Day - June 3

The big event started at 8:00 am Saturday as teams set up tents for glitter tattoos, first aid, petting zoo and the bouncy pirate ship and slide. A big thank you to the Ladysmith Rotary Community Service team that set up their big tent, the Disaster Aid tent and two smaller tents.

The fun got started in earnest at around 10:00 when the families came down. Adults and kids by the hundreds began to swarm the parking lot and docks, many dressed up as pirates and whole pirate families. Once again the Kinsmen Bullhead Derby was a big hit. Kids all over the docks were vying for derby honours and a nice rod and reel combo as first prize. Thanks to Justin from Yum Yum bait for providing free bait and ice.

Ladysmith Rotary Club manned the food tent and provided hot dogs, hamburgers and drinks to the hungry and thirsty attendants and volunteers. Many thanks to that team of committed volunteers.

Pirates Coming

At just after 11:00 Pirates were seen in the Bay and rumours floated around that there was going to be an invasion. Soon the good ship Saravan was seen approaching the dock with 3 pirates on board, fully decked out with pistols and cutlasses.

The pirates turned out to be our friends Captain Jack, Miss Scarlett and Captain Barbossa. The crowd went wild and the boat was barely able to dock without incident. The friendly pirates spent the next 4 hours meeting with their fans and posing with the kids for pictures.

The pirates were clearly the highlight of the day and later they commented on what a wonderful town Ladysmith was and what a sense of welcome and community they felt from their visit. They were also happily amazed at the love and politeness they got from the kids. They look forward to attending next year as they have for the past 6 or 7 years.

Ladysmith Day Parade - Pirates Float

Aur great group of volunteers jumped on the idea of an LMS Pirates Float. Thanks to Rod MacNeil and the team in the Car Shop we soon had a pirate ship decked out on a trailer. Volunteers from LMS and Pemberton Holmes manned the ship. We handed out hundreds of doubloons to the kids in the crowd. It was a fun way of raising awareness about LMS and Kids Pirate Day. And we won ribbons for Best Costumes and Comic Float. A big thanks to Rod smith and Cheryl Bancroft for making it happen.

Kids Pirate Day 2018

2018 will see a float in the parade again and a continuation of what makes this event great; Pirates, bullheads, clowns and face painting. We are planning on having the Sailing Vessel "Thane" as our Pirate ship. So make sure you plan to attend again and bring kids. This event sticks in the minds of kids and adults alike. Each year is a little different but the main theme will always be making memories for kids while enjoying the beauty of our waterfront.... and PIRATES!!!

Gerry Beltgens is Chair of the Kids Pirate Day Committee, a board member of LMS and past president of the Rotary Club of Ladysmith. He is the co-manager of the Ladysmith office of Pemberton Holmes.

