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# 'Gales of November' ceremony pays tribute to those who lost their lives on the Great Lakes

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Megan Sampson, 17, of Port Huron tolls a ship's bell Saturday at the Great Lakes Maritime Center in Port Huron honoring those who have lost their lives during November on the Great Lakes. She is a petty officer third class in the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps. / BOB GROSS/TIMES HERALD

By BOB GROSS  
Times Herald

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A brass ship's bell tolled seven times Saturday for the mariners and others who have lost their lives on the Great Lakes and connecting waters during the month of November.

"It means something, that they are never forgotten," said McKahla Breck, 16, of Algonac, a seaman apprentice with the U.S. [Naval Sea Cadets](#). "All of the hard work and dedication means something."

The Sea Cadets and others gathered Saturday at the Great Lakes Maritime Center in Port Huron for a short "Gales of November" ceremony.

'This is to honor all those who have lost their lives in November on

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the Great Lakes," said Peter Werle, operations manager at the Great Lakes Maritime Center. "It's a perilous time to be a sailor, it's a perilous time for the ships."

A short list of maritime disasters on the Great Lakes during the month includes the "White Hurricane," a huge storm from Nov. 7-11, 1913, that claimed 12 ships, including eight in Lake Huron, and at least 255 sailors; the sinking of the Daniel J. Morrell on Nov. 29, 1966, in Lake Huron resulting in the loss of 28 of 29 crew members; and the sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald on Nov. 10, 1975,

in Lake Superior with the loss of all 29 crew members.

"Every sea captain I've talked to is amazed at how fast and how violent storms form on the Great Lakes," Werle said.

Bill Barnhardt, captain of the Grayfox training ship manned by the Sea Cadets, said the young people are eager to participate in the ceremony.

"They volunteer, they want to do it," he said. "We're not just pushing Navy -- we're pushing maritime. We want to give them as much maritime experience as possible."

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