

Blessing of the Fleet is a poignant event

By Laurie Schreiber

BAR HARBOR — The annual Seafarer's Memorial and Blessing of the Fleet touched the hearts of attentive visitors to the pier here, last Sunday.

There was an air of both solemnity and joy, as work and recreational boats proceeded past the Maine Sea Coast Mission's vessel *Sunbeam V* to be blessed.

A morning fog cleared just in time for the event, which saw children romping on the pier and organizations setting up educational displays and fun activities for the afternoon. In addition to tours of the *Sunbeam* and a Coast Guard vessel, there were displays provided by College of the Atlantic, Island Institute, Lobster Institute, the Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory, Maine Sea Coast Mission, and a demon-

stration of the use of a survival suit by the Coast Guard.

Organized by the Working Waterfront Committee, proceeds from the activities, which include a dance the evening before, go to a fund for emergency financial assistance to fishermen from Mount Desert Island.

Following a prayer by the mission's executive director, the Reverend Gary DeLong, State Senator Dennis Damon read a proclamation from Governor Baldacci recognizing Sunday, June 1, 2008, as Seafarer's Memorial Day. The Rev. Charles Bradshaw then read the names of local fishermen who had lost their lives at sea and asked for silent prayers for any others lost at sea. Area clergy offering their blessings to the fleet included the Revs. Bradshaw and Scott Records, and Father Jack O'Hara.



A father and son cuddle up as clergy aboard the *Sunbeam* prepare for prayers. LAURIE SCHREIBER PHOTO



The lobster fishing boat *Silver Spoon*, followed by fishing boats *Emily Catherine* and *Remington*, is dressed up with yellow buoys for last Sunday's Blessing of the Fleet. LAURIE SCHREIBER PHOTO



The procession of a Coast Guard cutter, the mussel barge *Stewardship*, and the schooner *Margaret Todd* form a stately conclusion to last Sunday's Blessing of the fleet.

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Kids romp among their more solemn elders on the Bar Harbor pier during the Seafarer's Memorial.

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PROCESSION...The colorful hulls of the emerald-green tour boat *Lulu*, *Finest Kind* in bright yellow, and the blue mussel barge *Stewardship* — along with the schooner *Margaret Todd*, a Coast Guard cutter, and other workboats — make a pretty sight on the water during last Sunday's annual Seafarer's Memorial and Blessing of the Fleet in Bar Harbor.

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