

DR. LAURA SCHLESSINGER TO SPEAK, RACE AT WEST MARINE/ CHALLENGED AMERICA REGATTA AND DINNER ON JUNE 11-12

SAN DIEGO, CA – Nationally renowned talk-show host and author Dr. Laura Schlessinger will lend her voice and winning sailing skills to Cortez Racing Association and West Marine for a benefit to support sailors with disabilities in the second annual West Marine/Challenged America Regatta, June 11 & 12, 2010, in San Diego.

“Dr. Laura Schlessinger is known all over the country for her very popular radio talk show and best-selling books, but what most people don’t know is she’s an avid sailor who has won several trophies,” said Lee Pearce, Commodore of the Cortez Racing Association. “Having Dr. Laura take time out of her busy schedule to come to San Diego to help us by giving the keynote speech at our Friday, June 11 dinner and auction is truly a special treat. And to have her participate in the Regatta on June 12 will be as much fun for us as it will be for her.”



The second annual West Marine/Challenged America Regatta is a fundraising event launched by Cortez Racing Association (CRA) and sponsored by West Marine to help support the charitable Challenged America adaptive sailing program for disabled veterans, kids and adults with disabilities.

Thanks to Challenged America, people with disabilities of all kinds, from military veterans to wheelchair users and the blind, learn to sail in specially modified boats with the help of skilled volunteers and sailing enthusiasts.

“Sailing is a magnificent experience of sensations,” said Dr. Laura Schlessinger. “One can ‘feel’ the wind on your face or neck, and judge its direction and strength; one can ‘feel’ the warmth of the sun or the chill of its absence; one can ‘feel’ the powering up or powering down of the boat as wind strength picks up or drops out; one can ‘feel’ the power of the waves as they challenge the hull; one can ‘feel’ the boat surging through the elements by its heel and motions; one can ‘feel’ the shared excitement through the camaraderie of the crew mates. One doesn’t need sight, nor hearing, nor all one’s limbs to experience the essence of sailing.

“I am looking forward to sharing the awesome experience of sailing with all those who participate in the West Marine Challenged Regatta.”

TWO DAYS OF EVENTS

Beginning on **Friday, June 11**, at 4 pm, local yacht club commodores will race in the Challenged America program’s Martin 16, two-person sailboats from the Bali Hai Restaurant’s dock for bragging rights of winning the (perpetual) “**Commodores’ Challenge**” trophy. Point Loma Yacht Club will defend their win from last year in this hotly contested race, attracting many to cheer on their favorite commodore as he or she

learns to sail and navigate the course in a 16-foot sailboat that the disabled sail regularly on San Diego's Big Bay.

CELEBRATORY DINNER AT BALI HAI

Following the Commodores' Challenge race, **dinner** begins at 6 pm in the outdoor pavilion of the newly renovated, lovely **Bali Hai Hawaiian Village** restaurant, with America's Cup champion **Dennis Conner** making introductory remarks. The four-time America's Cup winner has a long association with Challenged America, including skippering their boat, B-Quest II, to victory in many race events, and has shown his personal support of the organization with generous donations.

Following Conner's remarks, **Dr. Laura Schlessinger** will give the keynote address. The silent auction (with surprises) follows, and the evening's festivities end with an after-dinner social on the waterfront edge, overlooking the scenic lights of downtown San Diego.

REGATTA ON SAN DIEGO BAY

On the next day, **Saturday, June 12**, the **West Marine/Challenged America Regatta** officially begins with a noon first race start of more than 50 sailboats racing on San Diego's Big Bay. The course is planned from the Marriott Hotel to Harbor and Shelter islands. The **post-race awards and festive party** begin at 4 pm (with food and drink provided by local restaurants, prizes, music, etc.) in the parking lot of the Point Loma West Marine store, on Rosecrans Street.

"We are expecting a capacity crowd for the dinner and auction on Friday, and more than 400 racers and volunteers on Saturday, plus countless others on the water in spectator boats and on the shoreline watching the racing. Two races are planned for the day, with many sailors with disabilities also racing," said Urban Miyares, blinded Vietnam veteran, sailor, and Challenged America co-founder. "Everyone in San Diego will want to be part of this exciting and fun San Diego event on the waterfront to benefit kids and adults with disabilities, and meet those sailors and celebrities in attendance. We are still seeking sponsors, auction items, and donations ... and registration for the Regatta and ticket sales for the Friday event are now being taken."

The West Marine/Challenged America Regatta is a yearly event organized by Cortez racing Association to benefit the charitable Challenged America program for kids and adults with disabilities. A therapeutic adaptive sailing program conceived in 1978 by disabled San Diego veterans, hundreds participate in this free, volunteer-driven sailing program each year.

Funds from the West Marine/Challenged America Regatta will go directly towards maintaining the program's fleet of 12 vessels, providing free learn-to-sail and advanced sailing opportunities for those hospitalized, in therapeutic recovery or rehabilitation programs, and for kids and adults living with disabilities, along with their loved ones in the community.

Challenged America is a 501(c)(3) charitable program, and all contributions, vessel donations, gifts, and business support and sponsorship are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

ABOUT KEYNOTE SPEAKER DR. LAURA SCHLESSINGER

As one of the most popular talk show hosts in radio history, Dr. Laura Schlessinger offers no-nonsense advice infused with a strong sense of ethics, accountability, and personal responsibility; she's been doing it successfully for more than 30 years, reaching approximately 9 million listeners weekly. Her internationally syndicated radio program is also heard on Sirius/XM Radio, and is streamed on the Internet and podcast via StreamLink.

She's a best-selling author of eleven adult books and four children's books, and writes a monthly column for NewsMax, a daily blog (www.drlaurablog.com), and posts videos weekly on The Dr. Laura YouTube Channel (www.youtube.com/drlaura). Dr. Laura holds a Ph.D. in physiology from Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons, and received her post-doctoral certification in Marriage, Family, and Child Counseling from the University of Southern California. She has received an award from the Office of the Secretary of Defense for her Exceptional Public Service, and among her numerous other honors, has been the first and only woman ever to win the National Association of Broadcasters' prestigious Marconi Award for Network/Syndicated Personality.

In addition, Dr. Laura holds multiple trophies for sailboat racing, and is a Black Belt in martial arts. In the last several years, she has designed and handcrafted elegant jewelry for charitable causes, most recently raising over \$1 million from the sale of her jewelry for Operation Family Fund, which provides financial assistance to families of military personnel severely injured or killed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

INFORMATION AND TICKETS

Friday night's dinner and auction tickets, to hear Dr. Laura speak, are \$75 each, and the cost to participate in the Regatta is \$50 per boat. Scholarships are available to active Challenged America program (sailor and volunteer) participants, based on financial need.

For additional information to become a sponsor, donor or supporter, or to register your vessel for the regatta or purchase tickets for the West Marine/Challenged America Regatta dinner or other events, visit www.WMCAREgatta.com, or contact Kelli Gardner at Challenged America, (619) 523-9318, email Ahoy@ChallengedAmerica.org.