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Contact: Jefferson Holland, Minister of Propaganda / 410-263-9446 / jeffholland@annapolis.net

THIRD ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL TUG-Of-WAR SET FOR SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2000

The "Gulf of Eastport," formerly known as Annapolis Harbor, will be the scene of hotly contested battles for supremacy when the third annual "Slaughter Across the Water," the world's longest tug-of-war across a body of water, takes place on Saturday, November 4, starting at the "crack of noon." As many as 16 teams of about 30 tuggers each will compete in eight heats on either side of a 1,700-foot-long custom-made rope.

Residents of the little boating community situated on a peninsula across the harbor from Annapolis proper seceded from the city – and everyone else, for that matter -- in January, 1998, and forged the Maritime Republic of Eastport (MRE), an upstart nation replete with its own passports, currency, its own navy and militia, and its own flag.

In November, 1998, the citizenry challenged the Annapolis Jaycees to a tug-of-war, with a rope stretching across the harbor from the Annapolis City Dock all the way across to the end of Second Street, next to the Chart House Restaurant in Eastport. The MRE won two out of three heats and raised thousands of dollars for neighborhood non-profit groups.

"We claimed the right to rename Second Street," recalls Jeff Collins, MRE founding father and First Premier. "It's now called 'The Avenue of Our Glorious Victory.'" Last year, the MRE won five out of seven heats and renamed Annapolis Harbor.

"This year, when we win again – and we shall," says current Prime Mistress, Cindy Fletcher-Holden, "we'll rename the City of Annapolis. From November 4 on, it will henceforth and forevermore be known as 'Westport.'"

All eight heats will be finished before 2 p.m. The best viewing will be from the Annapolis City Dock or Second Street by the Chart House Restaurant. There's still time to join men's, women's and co-ed tugging teams. For more information, contact MRE Tug Chairman Rick Kennedy at 410-280-8562 or email at rickxp@toad.net; or Annapolis Jaycees Tug Chairman George Dands at 410-757-6822 or email at gdands@cti-hq.com; or see the official MRE web site at <http://www.themre.org>.

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