**News Release**

“Chicago’s Christmas Ship” Committee
Office of Public Affairs, Chicago, Ill.
Release Number: 11-01-CHI

**For Immediate Release**
Dec. 2, 2011

**Contacts:**
CAPT Dave Truitt (312) 222-0500
MST1 Brenden Otjen (630) 986-2155 Ex. 150
Petty Officer George L. Degener 216-902-6020
Jon Kaplan, Navy Pier, (312) 595-5327
Nick Shields, Navy Pier, (312) 595-5136

---

**Coast Guard Cutter “Adler” to dock at Navy Pier loaded with Christmas Trees destined for 1,200 inner city families**

*Chicago’s Christmas Ship continues tradition 12 years running*

**CHICAGO** – The Coast Guard Cutter Adler (WLB-216), acting as the “Christmas Tree Ship,” is scheduled to arrive at Chicago’s Navy Pier for a two-day event, starting Friday, Dec. 2, 2011 at 8:30 a.m. to distribute Christmas trees to twelve hundred deserving families. **The distribution of the holiday trees to trucks from community organizations will begin off the decks of “Chicago’s Christmas Ship,” the USCGC Adler, on Saturday, December 3, 2010 at 10:00 a.m., after the first three trees are given to three deserving families during a brief public ceremony.** Tours of the USCGC Adler will also be available to the public on Dec. 2-3 from 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

The Adler will arrive loaded with 1,200 Christmas trees purchased by “Chicago’s Christmas Ship” Committee to be distributed to disadvantaged families throughout the Chicago area. The Adler reenactment continues a treasured part of Chicago’s maritime tradition. The *Rouse Simmons* was the original “Christmas Tree Ship” that came to Chicago with fresh evergreens and wreaths for holiday season during the early 1900’s. The “Christmas Tree Ship” the *Rouse Simmons*, was a three masted schooner and was recognized by the Christmas tree tied to her tallest mast as she entered port. The *Rouse Simmons* was the principal means of bringing Christmas trees to Chicago for over 30 years.

Chicago’s boating community reenactment of the olden days of the *Rouse Simmons* landing in Chicago is now portrayed by the Mackinaw. The trees will be taken off the Adler by local youth volunteers, the Sea Cadets, Venture Crews, Sea Explorer Scouts and the Young Marines and loaded onto trucks for distribution to 1,200 deserving families throughout Chicago by Ada S. McKinley Community Services. The trees were purchased with money raised by the “Chicago’s Christmas Ship” Committee. This committee is comprised of and supported by all facets of the Chicago’s boating community: the International Shipmasters’ Association, Chicago Marine Heritage Society, US Navy League, Chicago Yacht Clubs, Friends of the Marine Community, Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Chicago Yachting Association.

“Chicago’s Christmas Ship” Committee will also host educational programs for local area schools aboard the Adler. More than 250 children from the Chicago area will learn about the role of the Coast Guard, the “Christmas Tree Ship” tradition, observe a Sea Partners ecology presentation and experience a ship tour by Coast Guard Auxiliary. Members of the Adler’s crew and volunteers from Chicago’s boating community will decorate the ship for the “Chicago’s Christmas Ship” tree event.

**This year Adler (WLB-216) is temporarily standing in for Mackinaw (WLBB-30) that replaced the original icebreaker Mackinaw (WAGB-83), which served the Great Lakes since 1944, and was donated for use as a maritime museum located in Mackinaw City, Mich. The Adler’s, homeport is Duluth, MN and is home to a crew of 50. Built in Marinette, Wisconsin and commissioned in June 2005, it is one of the Coast Guard’s most technologically advanced multi-mission cutters. In addition to its primary aids-to-navigation, the Adler also performs search and rescue maritime law enforcement and ice breaking missions. The Adler’s arrival is a culmination of efforts by the “Chicago’s Christmas Ship” Committee, working together with the Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, the Sea Partners Program, Chicago Navy Pier, private individuals, and the hard working generous boaters of the Chicago marine community to help make Christmas special for deserving disadvantaged Chicago families.**

###