

## Blessing of the Fleet Dedicated to Mary Ann Market

Tuesday's Blessing of the Fleet will be dedicated to the memory of Mary Ann Market, 74, matriarch of Miller Boat Line and Put-in-Bay philanthropist. Mrs. Market died early Monday morning at her island home.

The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Blessing of the Fleet will be held at 11 a.m. Tuesday, April 27, on Fox's Dock downtown Put-in-Bay. The Put-in-Bay School Choir will perform and Father Ron Brickner of Mother of Sorrows Catholic Church, Rev. Webster Maughan of St. Paul's Episcopal Church and Rev. Dan Keck of St. John's Lutheran Church will administer the blessings.

Chamber President Mike Steidl will give a brief dedication following the blessings.

Mrs. Market and her good friend Mary Ann McCann were co-chairmen of the Blessing of the Fleet for many years, beginning in 1986 when the event was established.

"Mary Ann was a true blessing to the Put-in-Bay community and the many lives she touched here," said Maggie Beckford, Executive Director of the Put-in-Bay Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau.

Ms. Beckford served with Mrs. Market on the boards of the Friends of Perry's Victory (Perry Group), and the Lake Erie Islands Historical Society, which Mrs. Market served on for 21 years as its longest member.

"There are so many things that she did for our community, our churches, our museum, our Perry Memorial, our arts council and our chamber of commerce," Ms. Beckford said. "She was courageous and loving and generous and she will be missed by everyone here without exception."

Mrs. Market, Past President of The Perry Group, was more than just a community leader, said Perry Memorial Superintendent Blanca Alvarez Stransky.

"Mary Ann was a true friend of Perry's Victory & International Peace Memorial," Superintendent Stransky said. "Her generosity to the park was only surpassed by her kindnesses toward the parks' staff."

Mrs. Market was an avid supporter of Perry's Victory and served on its board for many years, including four as President, 2005-2008.

"We at the park will remember with gratitude all of her contributions," Superintendent Stransky added. "We will remember her with a saddened, but happy heart."

Ms. Beckford said Miller Boat Line is by far the island community's greatest benefactor, contributing to an endless list of organizations, groups, non-profits, activities, events and causes.

"I don't remember her ever saying 'no'," Ms. Beckford said. "She was very low key about her giving. She'd always say the island has been very good to her family and she felt it only right to give back whenever she could."

Services will be held Saturday on Put-in-Bay for Mrs. Market. Neidecker, LeVeck, and Crosser Funeral Home, Port Clinton, are handling arrangements. She was preceded in death by her husband, William E. "Bill" Market III, in November of 2006.

The Markets celebrated the Centennial of Miller Boat Line in 2005. They purchased the boat line from Mary Miller in 1978 and encouraged their three children to join the operation in which they all were equal partners.

Mrs. Market is survived by her children, Julene, Billy and Scott (Susan), all of Put-in-Bay, and five grandchildren.