

Celebrities support Sailors Society campaign

Countdown stars Jeff Stelling and Rachel Riley don woolly hats to support seafarers
Countdown stars Jeff Stelling and Rachel Riley will be amongst thousands of people next week donning woolly hats as part of the Sailors Society Woolly Hat Week campaign. Seafarers have to battle with the elements regularly, and the now famous woolly hat is welcomed as a gift to those who arrive as strangers in ports around the world. Sailors Society operates in over 100 ports in 30 countries, offering practical and spiritual support through its network of port chaplains. The woolly hat is a practical gift as well as making them realise that someone is thinking about them, and cares.

Woolly Hat Week 2010 takes place between 7th and 13th February and This Morning star Phillip Schofield has already posted a photo on twitter wearing his woolly hat and urging his followers to get involved. The charity hopes that many companies and communities will join Phillip and the Countdown team in supporting the campaign, and has set up a special donations page for Countdown viewers at <http://www.justgiving.co.uk/Countdown-to-woolly-hats>. Viewers will be able to catch the Countdown team in their woolly hats on the Monday 8th February show at 3.25pm on Channel 4.

Sailors Society Ukrainian Port Chaplain Eduard Myrmyr knows that seafarers will be grateful to receive both the woolly hats and the gesture of support. He said: The gift of a woolly hat after a long journey, so far away from friends and family, is very much appreciated. Many recipients are not only very touched by the generosity, but also by the human element of appreciation; seafarers have long been the invisible workforce, and hopefully Woolly Hat Week can bring some further understanding of the part they play in our lives, as well as much-needed hats for seafarers adjusting to the cold winter months!

Sailors Society is hoping that companies will encourage their staff to take part in Woolly Hat Week by wearing hats to work in return for a small donation. The money raised will help the charity provide assistance to seafarers, as well as going towards the transportation and distribution of woolly hats to seafarers ill-prepared for colder climates.

Sailors Society Events Fundraiser Vicky MacLeod explained: Woolly Hat Week has been so successful in recent years, that we receive hats, knitted by kind volunteers from all over the world, throughout the year. We always welcome woolly hats, but also encourage donations to help towards transporting the knitted hats to the seafarers who need them most. This means sending them to places such as the Ukraine and South America.

Vicky added: We are extremely grateful to our community of knitters who continue to supply us with woolly hats. We also want to encourage involvement from others who might not be able to knit, but can still contribute and support our work. By wearing your woolly hat to work, and being sponsored or donating, we hope to raise awareness of the difficulties seafarers face and assist them with the help they require.

To find out more about Woolly Hat Week, email woollyhats@sailors-society.org or call 023 8051 5950. For more information about how the Sailors Society provides support for seafarers across the world, please log on to www.sailors-society.org

Ends

For more information, please contact Zoe Mitchell: zoe@lcm.co.uk or call 0845 345 6969
The Sailors Society is an international charity that provides a personal lifeline for seafarers throughout the world. Existing to enrich and enhance the well-being of the world's 1.2 million seafarers, the charity offers practical help, emotional and spiritual support and, when in dire need,

financial assistance and family liaison through our Port Chaplains and Seafarers Centres. Our Port Chaplains visit thousands of ships every year, directly addressing the needs of seafarers – irrespective of a person's belief or nationality – as well as maintaining vital links within the Ports that they operate. For more information, please visit www.sailors-society.org, or contact Zoë Mitchell at Logical Creative Marketing on: 0845 345 69 69 or email: zoe@lcm.co.uk For more information about Countdown, visit: <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/countdown>