



**For Immediate Release
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Iconic Sam Houston Tour Boat Celebrates 67th Birthday & Prepares to Sail into Official Retirement in 2026

Port Houston to Honor Milestone with Story-Telling Campaign from Houston Residents



Port Houston's M/V Sam Houston along the Houston Ship Channel

HOUSTON – Cue the confetti and ready the goodbyes: it's time to celebrate the 67th birthday—and the upcoming retirement—of Port Houston's beloved floating ambassador, the M/V Sam Houston! Since her maiden voyage on July 30, 1958, the Sam Houston has been more than a tour boat; she's a living symbol of Houston's maritime heritage. Now, as she prepares to sail into retirement, Port Houston is commemorating her legendary service with a public story-telling campaign honoring the moments and memories that made her iconic.

Over the decades, Port Houston has welcomed more than two million passengers aboard the tour vessel—from out-of-towners and local students to royalty, celebrities, political leaders, and astronauts—all eager to experience the pride and backbone of Houston, the Houston Ship Channel.

“The Sam Houston is more than just a boat; she’s a symbol of Port Houston’s legacy, hospitality and connection to the community,” said Charlie Jenkins, CEO of Port Houston. “For 67 years, she’s offered a front-row seat to the heart of maritime operations, helping guests understand the vital role our port plays in regional prosperity and global trade. As we celebrate her final season, we also reflect on the impact she’s made and the stories that will live on well after her last voyage.”

Port Houston recently announced plans to build a new tour vessel to expand its maritime education outreach, better serve guests with restricted mobility and reinforce the port’s commitment to environmental sustainability and carbon neutrality. The new vessel is estimated to set sail on her maiden voyage in 12-14 months.

Share your Memories of the Sam

At 95 feet long and with a capacity of 100 passengers, the Sam Houston has been the site of some inspiring and uplifting stories over the last half-century. She’s provided families with a rewarding daytime activity and also played Cupid more than once, sparking love stories that began on her decks and sailed into happily ever after. There have been countless memories made on the vessel, and now Houstonians have the opportunity to share their favorites.

“The Sam Houston has launched adventures, sparked lifelong friendships and captured the spirit of our maritime community and our city,” said Maria Aguirre, Director of Community Relations. “As we mark nearly 70 years of memories, we’re inviting everyone to share their favorite moments.”

Send an email to communityrelations@porthouston.com with your favorite memory, either tell your story in writing or through a short video or audio note, and Port Houston will begin compiling as the Sam Houston approaches her retirement in 2026. Memories will be shared along the way via Port Houston’s social channels.

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About Port Houston

For more than 100 years, Port Houston has owned and operated the public wharves and terminals along the Houston Ship Channel, including the area’s largest breakbulk facility and two of the most efficient container terminals in the country. Port Houston is the advocate and a strategic leader for the Channel. The Houston Ship Channel complex and its more than 200 private and eight public terminals is the nation’s largest port for waterborne tonnage and an essential economic engine for the Houston region, the state of Texas and the U.S. The Port of Houston supports the creation of nearly 1.5 million jobs in Texas and 3.37 million jobs nationwide, and economic activity totaling \$439 billion in Texas and \$906 billion in economic impact across the nation. For more information, visit the website at PortHouston.com.

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