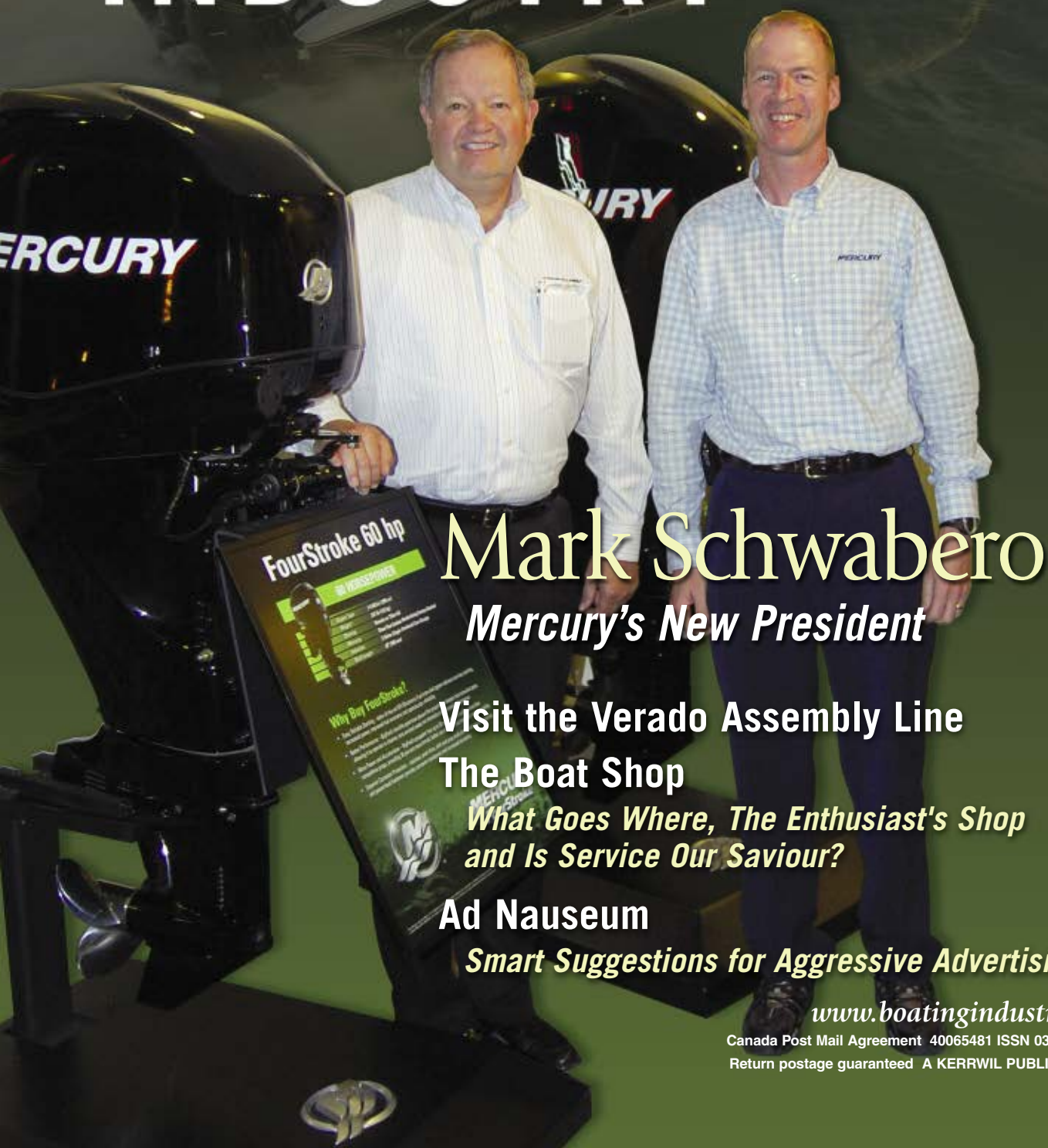


DECEMBER 2008

Boating

INDUSTRY CANADA



Mark Schwabero
Mercury's New President

Visit the Verado Assembly Line
The Boat Shop

*What Goes Where, The Enthusiast's Shop
and Is Service Our Saviour?*

Ad Nauseum

Smart Suggestions for Aggressive Advertising

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BY ANDY ADAMS

WORRIED ABOUT SALES?

The Solution May Be In Your Storage Shed

A relative of mine shared this piece of insight almost 30 years ago. They owned a major Toronto Chev/Olds dealership and as a car crazy young kid, I remember remarking about how exciting it must be, selling the new cars. My relative said something to the effect of, "Don't get carried away about new cars. We make our money in the service shop. New cars are gravy."

Marinas who view the service side of their business as a necessary evil to underpin new product sales may be missing a good opportunity; an opportunity that could save your business this year.

Unfortunately, marinas without the multidimensional advantages of sales, service, storage and perhaps a store or lodge, will almost certainly be less secure this year. I remember Scott MacCrimmon at Ed Huck Marine proudly showing me their beautiful new service area and at the same time commenting, "This winter the guys selling boats on the highway, may just blow away."

American boat dealers found that 2007 was a weak year. Now, 2008 seems to be about 40% down from 2007 levels. Those are dire straits down south. Canada is in a much better position. In a recent conversation with Al Donaldson at the Ontario Marine Operators Association, we learned that many Canadian marinas did well this year and the Service Canada numbers for new boat registrations indicate that more new boats were registered in 2008 than in 2007 and 2007 was a very strong year for many Canadian dealers.

Putting all this together, we hope that dealers who have had a good year, have made some investments, banked some money and are prepared for a downturn. After all, we wrote about an impending downturn for the Canadian market about six months ago here in Boating Industry Canada. It was Gary Poole from Buckeye Marine in Bobcaygeon who observed that by watching the American market, we actually have a sort of a "crystal ball" to predict our own future. It was a brilliant observation and I hope you've taken advantage of it for your business.

We've taken that comment to heart here at Boating Industry Canada. Last issue, we introduced our new department, The Boat Shop. We will be bringing more service department ideas, mechanical techniques, repair information, news about tools and materials; a whole range of practical information for people running service departments. My relatives in the car busi-

ness put the emphasis on their service department. Even 30 years ago, it was big, brightly lit and well run with an active parts department, knowledgeable service advisors and a backlog of bright young mechanics who wanted to work at a big successful shop.



Are skilled technicians waiting to work at your place?

We keep hearing about the shortage of skilled technicians in the marine industry but could part of the problem be dingy, badly lit shops with grease stained floors, cinderblock walls and a workbench littered with tools and old parts? Thinking about the kind of technician that you'd like to have working at your place; is your shop the kind of environment that will attract them?

If it isn't, maybe it could be.

Then, with good technicians, keep the service department humming by contacting the owners of the boats in your storage shed and talking to them. John Morris has a series of excellent suggestions in this issue in his Ad Nauseum column on page 20. As somebody who worked in a marina and drove many customers' boats, every one needed work of some kind.

Don't expect miracles at the boat shows this year but the insight is that your service department can still deliver a good year in 2009.

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On the Cover: Mark D. Schwabero (left) takes the reins at Mercury Marine as the new President. He is pictured here with Adrian Rushforth of Mercury Canada during our visit to Mercury's sprawling manufacturing facility in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. See Manufacturing & Fabrication, Page 6.

PUBLISHER

John Kerr
johnkerr@kerrwil.com

MANAGING EDITOR

Andy Adams
aadams@kerrwil.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Andy Adams, Sara Anghel, Glen Cairns,
John Gullick and John Morris

ADVERTISING SALES

Ian Gilson
igilson@kerrwil.com
• 905-719-5152
Tom Kjaersgaard
tkjaersgaard@kerrwil.com
• 705-715-7003
Greg Nicoll
gnicoll@kerrwil.com
• 416-620-9373
Yolande Teillet
yteillet@kerrwil.com
• 514-421-1749

ART DIRECTOR

Allan S. Bates

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Brian Gillett

KERRWIL
your market resource

800-2 St. Clair Avenue East
Toronto, Ontario M4T 2T5
Tel: 416-703-7167 Fax: 416-513-0348
www.kerrwil.com

Elizabeth A. Kerr
President

Greg Nicoll
Vice President

John W. Kerr, Jr
Chief Executive Officer



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subscribe@magazineservices.ca

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Mark D. Schwabero

Mercury's New President

By ANDY ADAMS

Of all the times we could have gone to visit Mercury at Fond du Lac, Wisconsin!

The softening marine market that began in 2007 was now accelerating at an increasing pace through 2008. The sub-prime mortgage meltdown had thrown the world financial markets into chaos and slowed down the flow of credit into the marketplace. The US Presidential election was still a few weeks away and featured an elderly warhorse Republican facing off against what could be America's first black president.

Hollywood couldn't have scripted a climate of greater uncertainty and there we were, interviewing Mark D. Schwabero who was at that time, President of the Outboard Business Unit.

We had just completed an extensive tour of Mercury's sprawling Fond du Lac manufacturing facilities including their propeller casting operation, Mercury's state-of-the-art lost foam casting facility and the company's exceptional Verado assembly line.

But instead of being pumped at all the great technology, or being gratified to see a continuing North American manufacturing success, we started our conversation about the marine dealers and the state of their businesses.

Naturally, at Boating Industry Canada, we care about the American



market, but our focus is Canada and in particular, the forces affecting the Canadian dealers.

"Well first," Mark began, "the Canadian market is very important to Mercury & Brunswick. While it is similar to the American market with all of the U.S. Brunswick boat brands and many independent OEM's offering the same models on both sides of the border, the Canadian market does a larger business in smaller outboards and boats. Currency fluctuations have recently made business conditions very difficult but there are still manufacturers in Canada, and Mercury has strong relationships with Doral, Campion, Legend Boats, Harborcraft and many smaller boatbuilders."

When we asked how the smaller dealers can survive the discussion turned to the issue of scale. "Expansion does not always work," Mark said, "In this climate, it may be better to concentrate on doing well with a couple of good lines in a location. You can live better, you can advertise better. The smaller, single location dealers may benefit by staying focused on their core business as compared to expanding multiple locations which may place additional pressures on their manpower, resources, and ability to service customers properly, so I'd recommend that they evaluate all of their options and

stay focused on the lines and services that drive your business.

If you are a Mercury Marine or Brunswick dealer, exploit the Brunswick Dealer Advantage program. It is really there to help dealers be more profitable. Choose which you want – from office supplies to succession planning and estate planning, etc. Another key point is the Mercury service training and their materials including the "Dealer Service Development Series" for learning at home." Mark was right up to speed on Mercury's new building in Canada and the new room Merc' has added in their new facility to expand the classroom product training.

Another point he raised was the benefits of managing your business using

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Mercury's online "MercNET" system to streamline your parts and engine ordering. MercNET allows dealers to set up pre-orders and helps dealers manage their parts and engine inventory levels.

Overall, it was clear that Mercury recognizes the importance of their dealer network, especially at this critical time and they are clearly dedicated to helping those dealers survive.

Mark's knowledge of the Canadian marketplace was impressive and the benefits of this knowledge will further aid Canadian dealers now that as of Thursday, November 6th, Brunswick Corporation has announced that Mark Schwabero has been promoted into Pat Mackey's former position as President of Mercury Marine.

While we had him in a conference room answering questions, we covered a broad range of issues.

With concern mounting as to the financial health of General Motors, GM has begun talking about phasing out a few of the engines used in the production of certain sterndrive products. This, combined with new legislation from the EPA that sets out tough new emissions standards, made us ask if we would ever see a 400 hp outboard that would be able to take the place of a sterndrive engine?

Mark answered that if they can do derivatives of existing products, then the answer is probably yes. Mercury has already done research and at present,

sees the market size as being small, particularly in Canada. But, he added that if there is a reasonable market, Mercury would consider producing outboards of that horsepower.

We asked Mark about the Axios product and the possibility of bringing that type of boat handling and control down to outboards. Mark's answer was that the hydraulic steering control actually was developed in the outboard area and although they haven't offered it yet, it is a possibility. He added that in particular, saltwater fishermen would love to have the station holding ability available in an outboard.

When we asked about the new tougher EPA levels and catalytic converters, Mark was comfortable that there is a long horizon for this; perhaps five years. "I worry more about fuel issues," He told us. "Ethanol content is affecting a lot of boats and if we have to survive with higher ethanol levels, it will detract from boating".

At present, boating and marinas seem not to have the clout to effect the ethanol situation. That is driven by vehicular needs and partly by pricing.

You have to manage those things that you can control and Mark's greatest (in fact Mercury's greatest) challenge is to keep manufacturing profitable in the US. While a few parts are out-sourced from suppliers that could be anywhere, much of what goes into every Mercury Outboard engine is made in North America – Fond du Lac,

Wisconsin to be exact.

So far, the greatest expression of what can be done is to tour the plants in Fond du Lac and to examine the Verado line in detail. It is almost certainly the most sophisticated outboard on the market and the engine is a work of art. It is also an expression of how the Lean Six Sigma concept can be applied.

We asked Mark to briefly tell us what Lean Six Sigma is.

"The Lean Six Sigma explanation of lean manufacturing is to take waste and variation out of the process. For example, how many times does a part get handled or experience some kind of an operation? Lean Six Sigma is a business management strategy that seeks to identify and remove the causes of defects and errors in manufacturing and business processes. It uses a set of quality tools, including statistical methods to systematically address an opportunity. Mercury has trained employees to be Green Belts and Black Belts etc. to be experts in these methods. Each Six Sigma project carried out within an organization follows a defined sequence of steps and has quantified financial targets.

"A simple example on the Verado line would be the handling of the cowl. The cowl comes in on a dolly from the supplier. It is easier to move with less chance of damage. We already have hundreds of Green Belts in the organization. We are most proud of the culture that is being changed within Mercury. People understand the operation better by dealing with waste and this brings them greater job satisfaction.

He admits that he's had to lay off some people already and furlough the plant for some down time but with the culture change and greater understanding of the business some employees have come in and said to Mark, "We really appreciate the balance of the layoffs and down time and appreciate that you are trying to minimize the negative impact this economy is having on the workers."

Mark said, "This is just another reflection of the way Mercury is transforming itself beyond just having a phenomenal product line and a great parts and service support organization." ●

Touring Mercury's Verado and OptiMax Plant 15

By ANDY ADAMS

In the interest of space, we won't share with you, the state-of-the-art lost foam casting plant in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin where Mercury typically builds 40 new Verados per day and another 340 2-stroke models between 6 and 115 hp but the lost foam casting plant is where the Verado story begins.

This very specialized technique delivers remarkable precision and detail in the cast parts and as you watch a Verado being assembled, you could not help but notice that this engine is a work of art. The shiny black powder coat paint contrasts with the bright machined aluminum on most parts.

The lost foam plant casts most of the main parts while other areas at the Fond du Lac facility perform milling and machining operations. Some parts are sourced globally but this really is an American engine.

In the plant is an area called the Marketplace. It is where the parts are kept and "Kanban" cards are used to guide and monitor material flow, bring items out of the Marketplace parts and accessories area as they are required and hopefully, with a mini-

mum of handling.

The Verado line itself is bright, clean and quiet – a comfortable place to work compared to many plants and the employee satisfaction level seems very good here. Even while we were visiting in October 2008, amid the crashing US economy, the plant was running, engines were being built and shipments were going out.

Through the application of lean manufacturing and Six Sigma, (and in spite of the very sophisticated Verado design) Mercury builds these engines in 3 hours where it used to take 12!

Come on the tour with us and have a look at a few of the assembly stations on the line...



The short block, or green power head starts with the head assembly positioned in a jig. The aluminum and steel machining is done here in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.



Process control is where the technicians collect the "birth history" of the engine and sensors track the assembly process to ensure completion of tasks like adding the proper lubrication before the part moves on. The system will physically not release a part until it has met all the necessary steps. Here, the valve keepers have been added. Other steps are where lasers scan and leak test the combustion chamber and ensure that valves return correctly.



Quality control tests are conducted at all points. Pistons are checked for specifications as they are selected. Since the engine is built from the head up, this technician uses an auto-oiler as he inserts the pistons. At the next station, a machine picks out the crankshaft and bearings. Lights guide the operator on which one to select. Next the rod and cap assembly and minor parts are added.



This is an automated station where the crankcase sealant is applied by a robot. It used to take 12 hours to build an engine but now they can build a Verado in 3 hours. Verado models from 135 to 300 and the 350 horse high-performance motors are all built on this one line by selecting different parts. At this point, an operator will add the long bolts (which are up to 14 inches long) and hold all the parts in compression as they add the crankcase to the block on the head.



Camshafts are scanned for accuracy before installation and in the process, they are measured to determine the correct valve lash for the particular engine. Gears and shafts have been machined and hardened at a nearby plant before being brought to the Verado line. Elsewhere, a duplicate line builds 75, 90, and 115 horsepower four-stroke engines.



Here, the operator removes the cam caps to install the cam shafts. She will take all the previous gauging information that has been gathered in the birth history and this determines which “buckets” are to be used on each valve. These buckets vary by a few microns and colored lights guide the operator to choose the correct ones. There is a slightly different thickness bucket for each individual valve stem to achieve the level of precision Mercury has specified for the Verado. Next, the camshaft goes down and a machine tightens all of the bearing caps before the operator adds the cam sprockets and chains.



The next station checks that the oil galleries are clear and they rotate the power head to check the timing and verify that all parts move freely. Next, the J-hook line lifts the engine to the transom assembly and records that into the birth history. Then the J-hook picks up the heavy assembly with ease and precision and sets on the drive shaft housing. Now that the block and the drive shaft housing are married, an operator installs the electronic shift actuator, supercharger and oil cooler.



Next, a technician maneuvers the engine into a tank and adds a piece to the flywheel so it can be turned. An auto check machine checks the gear ratio and correct propeller rotation, checks forward, neutral and reverse gears, checks idle to 1000 rpm and checks the starter, ensuring that the engine meets its first set of basic performance specifications. Three engines in every 10 are removed for a full test run. Each undergoes a cylinder balance test where spark plugs are disconnected one by one to see if the engine drops power. This process makes it an “audit engine”. Once they know it’s a good engine, they serialize it with the proper serial number.



If there is any problem, a special tool allows Mercury to follow the birth history back to figure out how to fix the engine and what exact individual parts are needed. Last, they put the cowl on and give the whole engine a final polish before being crated for shipping. Altogether, three hours of assembly!





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Is Service Our Savior?

An interview with Gary Coleman

BY ANDY ADAMS

It seems clear to us that we have the potential for a really weak year on new product sales so, to protect our dealer network and keep talented people in the marine industry, we need a more reliable source of revenue than new boat sales.

Is service our savior? Heading out in search of experience and clever ideas, we tracked down Mercury Marine's Gary Coleman and started asking his advice.

Echoing Brunswick Corporation's strategic goal of making boating more enjoyable, Gary began by explaining that Mercury does a very extensive CSI follow up program starting when every new Mercury owner registers their warranty. At that point, the dealer should be checking for any new product fixes that may apply to the customer's new engine. If those customers ever have a warranty claim, it's typical for Mercury to perform a CSI follow up for any claim over \$50. They ask the customer a series of customer satisfaction index questions. Mercury really does want them to be happy with their boat.

ATTEND REGULAR TRAINING SESSIONS

Gary put special emphasis on the importance of attending regular training. Gary told us, "We've created our learning management system which lets the technicians chart their own course; learn what they need to learn at their own speed. That way, it's convenient for them to stay up-to-date on the latest information and techniques. It may seem obvious that technicians would benefit from attending training but it seems that the people who don't attend, don't seem to realize what they're losing.

Use the new Mercury "Dealer Service Development Series" of DVD's to brush up at your own pace.

At Boating Industry Canada, our mission is to help all dealers, whether they are Mercury or not, have a more successful and profitable boat shop. Gary recognizes the challenges our industry may face for new product sales this year and he agrees that maintaining the success and the strength of the dealership is something where the service department

can play a major role.

He has some concerns though.

GET THE RIGHT TOOLS

A major concern is that shops need to have the right tools and in today's world that means a notebook computer and diagnostic software for all newer engines from 25 hp up.

"The guessing days are over," Gary said "the backyard guys can't succeed anymore because they don't have the right tools".

Gary also agreed that many dealers have a gold mine of work among their existing customers, that they can tap into this year but he recognizes that one barrier to increasing winter work is the fact that many of the boats are already shrink wrapped.

First, Gary suggests that even if the boat has already been "shrunk", the propeller is still visible and it's easy to go out and see who needs a new or repaired propeller. Another key idea is to add a doorway on larger boats or to open up the stern on smaller boats to expose the

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[THE BOAT SHOP Part-1]



engine while still being able to close the boat back up using a minimum of new shrink wrap.

BOOK SERVICE WORK NOW

Another idea is to offer an incentive to do service work now. You can't recover from a soft season of new product sales even if you run the service department 24/7 in July and August — the season is just too short. You have to start now.

Our comments about the working conditions and the appearance of the service departments were another point that resonated with Gary.

This fall, pay the mechanics to clean the shop up, now that all the boats are stored for the winter. "A few gallons of paint a few hundred dollars in fluorescent lights plus a week of labour is probably all you need to transform a dingy and unpleasant working environment into a shop where technicians will want to work.

IS YOUR LABOUR RATE TOO LOW?

"I appreciate the effort people put into initiatives like the OMOA's 5 x 10 training program but we need to have more marinas step up to the plate. Give the technicians year-round work and pay them fairly for it. I've seen labor rates as low as \$45 an hour. What can the marina possibly be paying the technician when that's their labor rate? I'm not saying you can put your labor rates up to \$130 either, but I believe that customers rarely look at the labor rate. They focus on the total bill to repair their boat. If a top technician can fix it well and in a short space of time because they have a well-equipped shop, the right diagnostic

tools and the right education, then everybody benefits."

COMMUNICATE WITH CLIENTS MORE OFTEN

"I also think the marinas can communicate with their clients more often. For boats still under warranty, check for product recalls and fixes and then contract the client to offer to repair their boat with no charge. It's a proactive relationship builder," Gary said.

The he added, "Follow the Mercury maintenance schedule and contact your customers to ask if you should proceed with maintenance work over the winter. If you tell them that their impeller needs to be replaced every three years, they'll probably appreciate the attention."

Gary also suggested walking into a quality car dealership like Honda, Toyota or even Mercedes. Look into the service area. The technicians are all wearing uniforms. The shop is well-equipped and bright and they turn the service experience in to an exercise in customer retention. We would benefit from doing more of that in the boat business. There are all kinds of great ideas. For example one of the top repair shops has installed a heated floor. The technicians just love that because they don't get cold feet even when they're out there working all day. Apparently that saves on heat costs too!

This winter, get creative, get training and get that boat shop humming! ●

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What Goes Where with Caulks, Sealants and Adhesives

BY GLEN CAIRNS

INTRODUCTION:

The subject of sealants and adhesives is a complex one and there is no shortage of literature on the subject both from manufacturers and technical journals. Our purpose here is just a quick overview with a few suggestions as to what to watch out for before you open the tube. Most shop owners and supervisors are very familiar with the different properties, advantages and disadvantages of the many products available. But where we sometimes fall short is assuming that the less experienced worker will make the right choice or even more importantly, ask the right question. So let's start there with a short list of questions to ask before getting started:

- What is the purpose of the joint?
- Is it structural?
- Is the joint meant to be flexible?
- Will the joint be exposed to ultraviolet light? The obvious signs of UV damage are chalkiness and cracking. All the major manufacturers produce UV protected products.
- Will the joint be exposed to water?
- Will the joint be exposed to fuel or other possible contaminants?

It is essential to consider what other chemicals will come in contact with the adhesive or sealant. Careful attention to preparation and the use of primers is essential to protect the adhesive or sealant from possible contamination. The various manufacturers all have information on this on their web sites.

For example, some caulking materials can be damaged by anti-fouling



paint. When repairing older wooden boats, people often go to town with sealants to deal with leaks. This is fine up to a point, but it is important to realise that if the boat is anti-fouled with an ablative paint and then not launched in short order, the antifouling can attack the sealant causing it to soften and depolymerize (i.e. turn into "goo"). In this case a primer is needed to protect the caulking material (More information on this is available at www.sika.ca information bulletins).

Will the joint be exposed to shock loading, or other types of stress such as static (weight) load or dynamic load caused by factors like wind and wave action?

The enemy of any job, whether adhesive or sealant, is dirt. Any joint or surface to be joined must be clear of all contaminants such as dust, oil, paints or previous sealants. Since we are creating

a chemical bond nothing must interfere with the process.

Choose your materials with care and test the results to be sure before you use it.

After answering the questions above, what do you need: caulking, sealants or an adhesive?

Adhesives are to be used in areas that are structural and where strength is the number one priority. All the major manufacturers have one or more products in this category. 5200 is the most widely known 3M-product adhesive and it has been around for some time. Anyone who has tried to remove a piece of hardware bedded with 3M 5200 can attest to its holding power. Adhesives should not to be used on anything that will have to be removed for maintenance. Most adhesives have a slow curing rate, usually 48 hours for tack free and 5 – 7 days for full curing. However, faster curing adhesives are available when time is a factor. Working carefully and cleanly is a must with slow cure adhesives if one is to avoid the "tar baby" syndrome.

Considering which adhesive to use raises an important point. Just how strong does the adhesive need to be? If the strength of the adhesive far exceeds the strength of the underlying substrate, then there may be advantages to using a product with slightly different characteristics, such as greater flexibility.

Krys Wesselink, of Sika Canada, warns that "In product selection there is the temptation to choose the strongest product possible, but this is not always the best decision. If the strength of the bonding material far exceeds the inter-

nal strength of the substrate, for example the bond of gel coat to resin, then it is stronger than it needs to be, potentially sacrificing other properties such as flexibility. Consider all the properties of the product selected not just the top of mind priority."

Sealants may have adhesive qualities, but their primary function is to keep water out. They may be polyurethane or polysulfide, but it is always important to check the compatibility of the product chosen with the contact surface. Polysulfides, for example, should not be used in contact with some types of plastic.

Aside from bedding hardware, another important place where sealants are used is in direct glazing, that is to say, bedding frameless windows. These are common on small craft and are an area frequently needing attention in older boats. The issue of UV mentioned above is of particular concern in this application. Remember there are two ways UV attacks the polyurethane; inside and outside.

On the outside or exposed surface on the joint, UV causes the sealant to feel rough, chalky and cracked. A UV stabilized product will slow this process, but cannot fully protect the bond line, which is only a single molecule thick. UV will eventually break down any organic material, so UV protection delays, but does not prevent deterioration. To protect the bond line on the inside, UV shielding such as black primer or moulding is necessary. There is an excellent description of this on the Sika web site at www.sika.ca.

Caulking is used to hide a seam or to seal out water.

The most common re-caulking job these days is replacing cracked and deteriorated seams in teak decking. Those beautiful teak decks so popular on boats of a certain age all inevitably need refinishing. There is good information from both BoatLIFE and Sika on products and procedures for doing this. Here's a quick review of some of the main points to keep in mind.

- **Clean:** The seam must be thoroughly

cleaned to remove any old material. Best results are achieved by having a fresh wood edge, so routing out the seam to the proper shape is a good idea. Once cleaned the seam should be washed with an oil-free solvent.

- **Primer:** Depending on the product, the seam must be primed with the correct primer
- **Masking:** The best result will be had if the seams are masked. This is labour intensive but saves time in finishing with less sanding required and less mess.

Working inside is best, but if working outside, make sure the decks are protected for the first 24 hours. Remember to be careful choosing cleaning products for teak decks. Some teak cleaners are too aggressive and can damage not only the seam material but also raise the grain on the teak which will shorten the life of the wood.

Silicone is the most ubiquitous of sealants, but sometimes also the most misused. Silicone is not really a sealant or adhesive at all, but rather a gasket material. Its adhesive properties are temporary at best. But, it is the best product for mounting plastics such as plastic port lights. Silicone can also be used to isolate dissimilar metals. This makes silicone the proper material for mounting hardware on an aluminium mast. Most silicone sealants will cure quickly, usually within 24 hours, which is a definite advantage. Silicone has considerable flexibility and will retain its properties for years. However, because of its relatively low strength, difficulty with over coating and tendency to collect dirt, silicone should really only be used where no other product can do the job. ●

SOURCES:

- 3M Canada at www.3m.com
- BoatLIFE at www.boatlife.com
- Bob Casey library www.boatus.com
- Sika Canada www.sika.ca
- West System www.westsystem.com

Thanks to Bill Suzuki of 3M, Kyrs Wessalink of Sika Canada and Jim Watson of West System.

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Clarion Boats

An Enthusiast's Shop

By ANDY ADAMS



23 YEARS AGO, Dwight Boyd originally set up Clarion Boats in Campbellford, Ontario. His goal was to get into the antique boat restoration business, restoring old wooden boats to their former glory [and beyond!].

As Dwight put it; there was a frenzy of restoration business from the 1980s through until just a few years ago. For a lot of that time, the Canadian dollar was down in the \$0.70 to \$0.80 range and yet our freshwater Canadian antique boats were relatively abundant, often in good condition and frequently one of a very few existing examples.

Dwight explained that the US buyers used to bargain shop in Canada, for restored boats or having their restoration work done here by skilled craftsmen whose labor was a bargain com-

Dwight's office features a boardroom table, leather chairs and oriental rugs because that is what the clients are comfortable with, when they come to buy their boat.

pared to American rates.

Today however, the best classics have been located, restored by shops like Clarion Boats and they are now with well-heeled owners from Ottawa to Lake Tahoe.

Two things have hit Clarion Boats hard in the last two years; the rapid appreciation of the Canadian dollar and the dwindling supply of old classics needing restoration.

Luckily, several years before, Dwight had formed a relationship with Canadian designer Steve Killing and they built a

Even with the new Killing-designed 23 Barrel Back being a "sort-of" production boat, clients love the line drawings and the mahogany half-models.

recreation gentleman's racer then later, a contemporary interpretation of the Gold Cup racers of the late 20s.

This started Clarion Boats down a very important path. Today, the shop is primarily dedicated to new boat construction and they are building small numbers of a new Steve Killing designed 23 foot Barrelback runabout and a 21 foot Gentleman's Racer.

When we visited Clarion Boats recently, Dwight was kind enough to share a few important words of advice. His original boats were custom one-off designs but the challenge is keeping a buyer interested through a build that may take 14 months. Today's buyers aren't prepared to wait. So, Clarion will be able to respond quickly.

That is one concession to success. We asked Dwight what else it took to keep Clarion Boats operating successfully.

"Labor costs are the key component; engines and other parts are not really that big a factor. We need to manage the cost equation carefully because we also have to attract and keep skilled employees," Dwight explained.

"These guys are really the unsung heroes of the business," Dwight emphasized, "These are the guys who really build the boats. It's not me."

The shop itself is critical. To attract and keep the skilled craftsmen that make Clarion Boats what they are, the shop has to be the sort of place an enthusiast would gravitate to.

"We make a mess for a living!" observed Dwight, "So, we need to make the shop a pleasure to work in. Every Friday afternoon, we close early, put everything away and sweep it all clean. Housekeeping is a matter of safety first, but it's critical to the image the clients get of our company."

Clarion Boats recently came to agreements with Gordon Bay Marine to be

continued on page 24



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Ad Nauseam

SMART SUGGESTIONS FOR AGGRESSIVE ADVERTISING

DEAR READER. The mail is generally arriving in tear stained envelopes these days – the theme consistently is ‘what do we do now?’ Below is a sample of questions I have received and some thoughts.

Q: With the economy in turmoil, clearly the marine market is unpredictable. We have seen recessions before, but from a marketing viewpoint, what can I do to salvage business in the midst of a storm?

A: One very smart move is to squeeze every last dime out of your ad spend. One day (soon, one hopes) the clouds will part and customers will smile again.

In the meantime, use your budget to build your brand. Sell your name, your people, your reputation and skills. Ads screaming about deep discounts simply breed fear and fear is not good. Even if you’re successful with a sale or two, where is the margin?

Sunni Boot, chief executive officer of media buyer ZenithOptimedia in Canada, shared observations on the tone of panic-stricken Christmas advertising in the retail sector, but her thoughts apply perfectly to boat ads in January. “Just listen to the retail ads now. That’s not brand building. That’s not brand advertising. That’s ‘I’m desperate and I need the cash register to ring’ advertising.”

No, this is a time for building your brand and keeping your existing customers loyal.

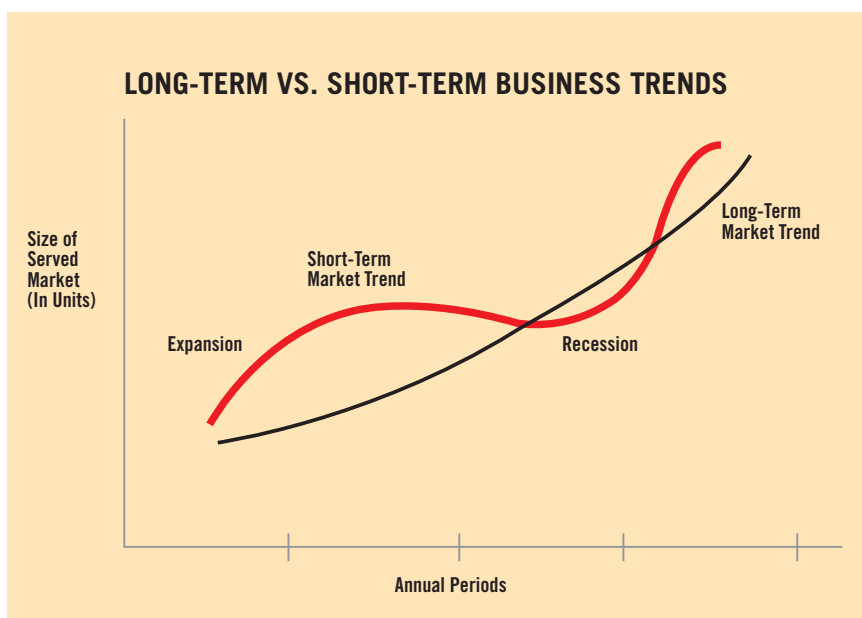
Q: An industry guru gave us a big lecture about customer satisfaction and how we will need to do things differently to address the 80 / 20 rule. What is that? And, where did it come from?

A: Wikipedia lists this as the Pareto principle (also known as the 80-20 rule, the law of the vital few and the principle of factor sparsity) which states what you likely know from your own experience; 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes. Esteemed business management thinker Joseph M. Juran suggested the principle and named it after Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto, who observed that 80% of income in Italy went to 20% of the population. If you apply this to your business, you will likely find that

80% of your sales come from 20% of your clients.

Those 20% (and some of the others) are the ones you will be counting on this year. They may not step up to a new boat, but they will see their boat as a source of pleasure, perhaps even moreso in a rough patch; “Honey, let’s skip the Paris trip this year and take the kids water skiing more”.

Their other thought is ‘since we’re not going to trade up this January, let’s make sure our 28-footer is in tip-top shape so we can hang onto it for a few years. Let’s add some toys.’ This revised thinking creates some excellent service/aftermarket opportunities that you can anticipate in your marketing efforts. After all, Christmas isn’t canceled; the Boat Show is still a time of joy as is spring launch. In



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tough times boating may be the saviour for a lot of people. They'll enjoy it even more with new canvas and a better prop.

Q: How can I figure out where my advertising dollars get the best return? I have nothing to waste this year!

A: Start with the question above and the Pareto Principle. If it is true that 80% of the business comes from 20% of the customers, then that is where you start.

By the way, you should know those 20% by name and hopefully, you have phone numbers, email addresses and the names of their kids and dog.

Contact them with useful or valuable news about the lake they love, the weather there, municipal developments or changes...set up a "Marina Cam" on your web site and invite them to watch your marina for a view of the lake and the weather. Add snow-load information. Give unexpected value.

While you have their attention, ask if

Set up a "Marina Cam" on your web site and invite them to watch your marina for a view of the lake and the weather

their boat needs any maintenance or repair work done. Suggest a winter stern drive 29-point inspection at a bargain price. Build winter work and make sure your marina service on their boat delivers high CSI next season. Invite them to your Spring Thaw dock party but lay off

the pressure to trade up – they just won't when times are unpredictable but they will look for every opportunity for a useful bargain or a party. When times are tough, knowing the marina you deal with is giving you value and more can be something of a help.

Q: Publication sales reps are telling me that now is the time to advertise to gain market share. Needless to say, they want my ad bucks, but is there any truth to this?

A: My August editor, who is a total pack rat and never throws anything out, recently shot over a study from 1982 entitled Media Advertising When Your Market is in Recession, prepared by a Dr. Valerie Kijewski for the Strategic Planning Institute in Cambridge, Mass, over 25 years ago. The copy was faded with multiple aged coffee stains that speaks more to Andy's housekeeping than the value of the information which eerily seemed

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[ADVERTISING & MARKETING]

to reflect exactly the issues we are facing today!

The study's first point (I am simplifying here) is that you need to look at business growth over a longer period. If your business is growing over a 4-year period and it takes a spurt for a short period, that is deemed expansion. If it grows a little less – they pick 4%– over a brief period, that is recession. The chart shows this graphically; please note the growth curve continues through the period, just not at the same rate.

(see chart page 20)

The study observes that in recession periods, some companies increase their share of market. This is because other competitors, particularly smaller ones, are less willing or able to defend their position. The result is that some firms look like they are being hit less during a recession, when in fact they are actually increasing their market share – a bigger piece of a shrinking or static pie is still more pie.

Frankly, I think it's likely you can find

Taco Bell and Pizza Hut bested McDonald's in the '91 recession by maintaining a heavy advertising weight

studies to support any position you would like to take. Sarah Palin certainly did. But what is important is that holding back isn't necessarily the right strategy. An oft-cited factoid: Taco Bell and Pizza Hut bested McDonald's in the '91

recession by maintaining a heavy advertising weight.

A far more proactive approach is to be as smart as you can, figure out where to go and then be as judicious as possible with resources as you get there.

Q: How about a few ideas to get more out of the boat show display investment that I can't get out of. It's big money and I'm worried the buyers won't show up this year.

A: Use your direct contact options through calls, email and letters. Be personal. Consider sending the 20% of customers who give you 80% of your revenue complimentary Show Passes that you can track and respond to later – they won't likely be buying boats, but they will appreciate your interest. Make this year's show investment pay in subsequent years by following up those leads with an eye to the longer term rather than closing spring deals. ●

[THE BOAT SHOP Part-3]

continued from page 19



This view of the shop shows the daylight, large overhead fluorescent lights and open, clear spaces where the craftsmen can see to work.

their dealer in the Muskoka Lakes and Paris Marine in the Kawartha's, but clients will still be able to come the shop

in person.

Dwight said, "Many people have told us 'You run a nice shop'. It really matters. It sells the clients because when they see the shop, they are confident that we can meet their expectations. We don't have to sell a lot of boats to make a comfortable living, but we know we always

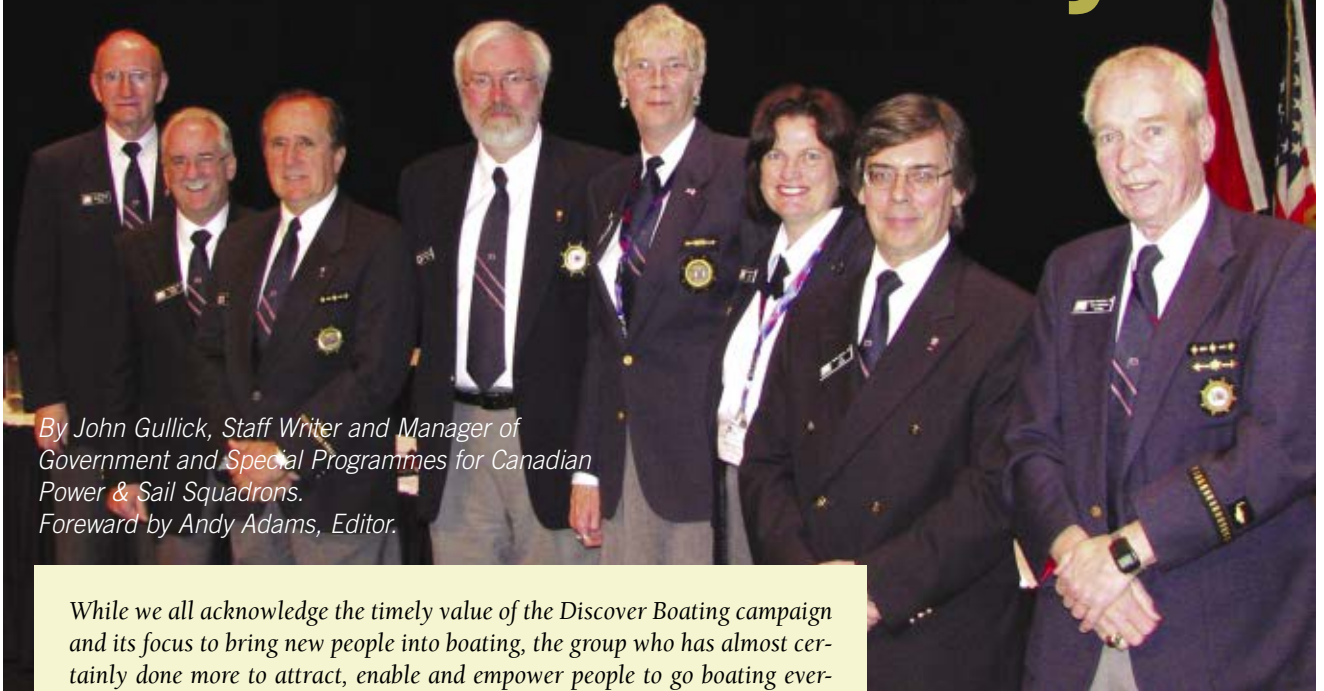


This is the main workbench at mid-week. A careful selection of a few tools, some floor machines and plenty of bright bench space makes this a place where the craftsmen can express their creativity and skill.

have to meet the expectations."

Maintaining a shop whose appearance instills confidence in the clients and whose working environment attracts the craftsmen that Clarion Boats needs, is the exact same winning formula that every marina operator needs to apply to their success. ●

Canadian Power & Sail Squadrons Celebrates its 70th Anniversary



*By John Gullick, Staff Writer and Manager of Government and Special Programmes for Canadian Power & Sail Squadrons.
Foreword by Andy Adams, Editor.*

While we all acknowledge the timely value of the Discover Boating campaign and its focus to bring new people into boating, the group who has almost certainly done more to attract, enable and empower people to go boating ever-further in safety and has instilled the confidence to handle ever-larger boats, is the Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons.

The "CPS" Basic Course and all the other increasingly specific courses offered by this remarkable group fulfill the knowledge needs of boaters from coast to coast but more importantly, the Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons has benefited the marine industry greatly for the past 70 years! Here is a brief report on the activities and current status of this influential group of boaters.

From Wednesday October 22nd until Sunday October 26th Canadian Power & Sail Squadrons (CPS) celebrated its 70 year history in Windsor Ontario where the first Squadron began in 1938. At this National Conference and Annual General Meeting about 300 CPS Member delegates gathered to exchange ideas and plan strategies for the ongoing development of training, membership, marketing and organizational activities. They also took time to enjoy the fellowship and celebrate. Boating activities and fun belong in the same sentence and that is what CPS is all about.

WHAT IS CPS?

Canadian Power & Sail Squadrons (CPS) is Canada's largest association of boating enthusiasts, with 35,000 plus members nationally. CPS is a federally registered charitable organization.

CPS is recognized, and often consulted by, various national, federal and local government agencies. It also works closely with the Canadian Safe Boating Council and other boating and industry associations. Some 25,000 boaters, each year, take safe-boating courses from CPS' more than 3,000 experienced, volunteer training personnel across Canada.

THE CPS MISSION STATEMENT

To increase awareness and knowledge of safe boating by educating and training members and the general public, by fostering fellowship among members, and

The new CPS National Bridge Officers

From Left to Right: Joe Gattfield - National Training Officer, Mal Blann - National Executive Officer, Harry Cole - Chief Commander, Richard Bee - National Administration Officer, Catherine Mcleod - National Secretary, Karen Connor - National Treasurer, Claude Martin - National Law Officer, Norm Headrick - National Chairman on Rules

IMPACT

A CPS marketing session in progress at the 2008 Annual General Meeting in Windsor.

Photo by Vanessa Schmidt

by establishing partnerships and alliances with organizations and agencies interested in boating.

Over the years CPS has developed and offered courses and seminars in basic boating education and safety for the PCOC, advanced boating education and safety, advanced piloting and navigation, celestial navigation, electronic navigation, marine electronics, marine maintenance, weather and global weather, maritime radio, distress signaling and more. All courses and seminars are presented in both French and English and it has even developed materials in Cantonese.

THE IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CPS AND YACHT CLUBS

Windsor Power & Sail Squadron and the Windsor Yacht Club

The history between these two organizations is synonymous. Windsor Yacht Club had its beginnings in 1937. Three members of the Windsor Yacht Club went to the Detroit Yacht Club



and took the United States Power Squadron Course Elementary Piloting. After some discussion, these same three men brought the Course to Windsor and began instructing it in 1938. At the same time they began Windsor Power Squadron, the original unit of Canadian Power Squadrons (CPS). Windsor Power Squadron was housed at the Windsor Yacht Club and many of the members of both organizations were one and the same. Courses were taught at the facility and meetings held there. The First Commander of Windsor, a Yacht Club Member, also became the first Chief Commander of CPS.

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IMPACT



Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons Governing Board meeting 2008.

Photo by Vanessa Schmidt

Although classes are now instructed in more formal venues, the Windsor Power & Sail Squadron still meets at the Windsor Yacht Club, holds many of its social functions there and the Commander is annually awarded a complimentary membership if they are not a member already. Over the years at least five Windsor Squadron Commanders have also been Windsor Yacht Club Commodores and at least one held both positions at the same time. This has been a very successful 70 year relationship and was the start of many similar relationships between local yacht clubs and CPS Squadrons all across Canada.

HERE ARE SOME HISTORICAL CPS MILESTONES

1938: First Squadron formed in Windsor, Ontario, with help from the Detroit Squadron United States Power Squadrons.

1938-1941: Two new Squadrons formed, one in Sarnia, the other in London.

1941: Representatives of the three Squadrons met and formed Canadian Power Squadrons.

1939-1946: CPS was somewhat dormant, chiefly due to WW II. A nucleus of members designed the CPS flag and submitted it to the Trade Marks Office for registration.

1947: The CPS Charter was granted by the Federal Government and a head office was established in Windsor, Ontario.

1948: The CPS flag was registered as a trade mark.

1949: First Annual General Meeting of CPS. It was resolved to move Headquarters to a more central location in Toronto.

1951: The first edition of "The Port Hole" was published by the Toronto Squadron. Later it became the official publication of CPS. The French name is "Le Hublot".

1955: Vancouver Power Squadron was the first Squadron to be formed on the West Coast.

1959: CPS had grown to 2,500 members in 42 Squadrons. A District structure was introduced. District Commanders replaced Squadron Commanders as members of the Governing Board.

1964: Membership was pushing 10,000 and after much dis-

cussion, property was purchased in Scarborough to build a new Headquarters. Escadrille Trois-Rivieres, the first French speaking Squadron, was formed.

1978: Yukon Squadron was formed, CPS' most northern Squadron.

1985: Membership approved the change of name of Canadian Power Squadrons, to more accurately reflect its membership of sail and power boaters, to "Canadian Power and Sail

Squadrons" (CPS); in French, "Les Escadrilles canadiennes de plaisance" (ECP).

1990: With the formation of Avalon Squadron in Newfoundland, CPS could proudly boast that there were Squadrons in all ten provinces.


1991: First woman elected to serve on the Operating Committee.

1998: Launch of the first Distance Education Learning Centre.

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1999: CPS launches its PCOC Operator Competency Program and by 2008 over 250,000 PCO Cards had been issued.

1999-2000: CPS membership is approximately 30,000. More than 500,000 people have successfully completed the Boating Course.

2002: CPS takes over and begins to manage the Maritime Radio Operator

Certificate program for Industry Canada. By 2008 over 65,000 new ROC(M) cards have been issued by CPS.

2005: A Digital Selective Calling (DSC) Endorsement is added to the ROC(M).

2006: CPS raises the bar by upgrading the Pleasure Craft Operator Card test for the highest standards in the industry.

2008: Celebration of Canadian Power & Sail Squadron's 70th Anniversary.

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF CPS

While dedicated to training and promoting safety in all aspects of recreational boating, CPS has a strong social side that develops lifelong friendships and fun. Over the years many memories have been created for our members. Here are but a few:

- The members' Atlantic trip from Halifax to New York aboard the liner Sylvania and the early morning awakening to see the Statue of Liberty.
- The delectable quiche served in Montreal's now demolished Windsor Hotel while troops patrolled the streets during the FLQ crisis.
- The splendor of Niagara Falls at night.
- The haunting sounds of Glen Miller beautifully played by a local high school band reverberating through the conservatory of Victoria's Empress Hotel.
- The charm and tranquility of Peggy's Cove in Nova Scotia.
- The late night false fire alarm in Ottawa's Holiday Inn that scared the devil out of everyone.
- The quiet charm of Old Quebec City and the fog that socked us in.
- The firefighters of Edmonton and Klondike Days.
- The clean air and magnificence of Banff.
- The underground city of downtown Toronto and the trip to the top of the CN Tower.
- The flotilla of boats passing under Vancouver's Lion's Gate Bridge in the torrential rain.
- The fabulous trip from Vancouver to Ketchikan, Alaska aboard the Princess Patricia, the CPS flag flying high on her mast.
- The first return to Windsor where it all began to celebrate our 50th anniversary and then,
- The return again to Windsor to celebrate our 70th.

Congratulations CPS on your 70th anniversary and may you have many more!

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BILL S-221 GONE AGAIN...FOR NOW

BY SARA ANGHEL, NMMA VICE PRESIDENT,
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

With the recent election in Canada, the industry should know that Bill S-221 "An Act Concerning Personal Watercraft in Navigable Waters" has died on the order paper.

As many of you may recall, this Act has appeared many times before but with a different number. In each case, it had the same fate. It would go through to a certain point in the process and then an election would be called or the Prime Minister would prorogue the house and it would die. Senator Spivak would in each case, reintroduce it and go through the process again. It is standard protocol that all pieces of legislation before the Canadian Senate and House of Commons are wiped out when an election is called.

In this particular instance, the Act might have passed through the Senate merely because it had been there so

many times before. However, the industry has helped me to slow it down in its tracks and so we have the Act facing the same fate again today! Together we have delayed this until it died on the order paper.

I am confident that the doubt which we raised with Senators at the Committee level regarding this bill, should be enough to have them ask the right questions if Senator Spivak should introduce it again after Parliament returns from the election. Had it not been for the NMMA's presentation to the Committee and for the many letters the industry sent to the Committee expressing concerns with this Bill, it might have made its way through the process.

Good work and stay tuned in case it comes to life yet again.

Randy Caruana is the New Mercury Marine Vice President, Sales for the Americas

Mercury Marine has restructured the senior levels of the Mercury organization under new President Mark Schwabero.

Although the restructuring, coinciding with Mark Schwabero's new role as President of Mercury Marine is ongoing as we go to press, we can report to his many friends and associates that Canadian, Randy Caruana is now the Vice



President, Sales for the Americas. The other new or recent appointments and executives reporting directly to Mark are listed below:

MARK SCHWABERO,
President, Mercury Marine

STEVE CRAMER,
Chief Financial and Administrative Officer

KEVIN GRODZKI,
President, Mercury Marine Sales, Marketing and Commercial Operations

INDUSTRY NEWS

FRED KIEKHAEFER,
President, Mercury Racing

RAY ATCHINSON,
Vice President – Human Resources

RANDY CARUANA,
Vice President, Sales for the Americas

STEPHAN CLOUTIER,
Vice President – Procurement

RICK ESTUS,
Vice President – Manufacturing Operations

DAVID FOULKES,
Vice President – Research and Development

MIKE GYOROG,
Vice President – Service and Marine Parts & Accessories

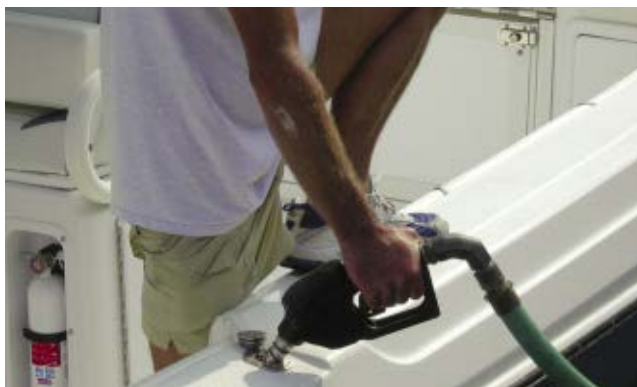
DAVID OLSON,
Category Vice President, Engines and Drives

BOB SEIDEL,
Vice President – Global Supply Chain

MIKE SHEDIVY,
Vice President, Marketing

More positive changes are anticipated shortly, but the new leadership team at Mercury seems well equipped to face the obvious challenges that the current US economy presents. Our congratulations to Randy on this well-deserved promotion.

Canadian Boat Builders Resource for New EPA Emissions Regulations



[RESOURCE DIRECTORY]

Gori® propeller

3-Blade Gori Folding Propeller:

Lowest drag. True blade shape gives increased efficiency. Greater thrust/power in reverse, no prop walk. Overdrive feature - increased thrust and higher speed, at lower RPMs with less engine noise and vibration, increased fuel economy and greater cruising range.

2-Blade Gori Std & Race Folding Propellers:

Reduces drag by up to 89%. One full knot improvement in speed. Geared blade design ensures a smooth positive action. Both blades open and close together at all times.

North National Outdoor Group Inc.

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Boating Industry Canada traveled to the IBEX show this past October where we attended a seminar that covered the new regulations from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that affects boats any Canadian builder may hope to sell into the US market.

Specifically, on October 8, 2008, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published a rule in the Federal Register that sets specific requirements and establishes specific dates by which boat builders need to adhere related to the installation of various evaporative emission technologies on all gasoline-powered engines.

These new regulations only apply to boats with gasoline fuel systems sold in the U.S. and do not cover diesel fuel systems.

The detail is far too lengthy to cover in this magazine but we have found that the best source of guidance to boat builders, is the Q&A section published online by the NMMA, addressing many of the most common questions manufacturers would have about the rule, its requirements and overall implications. You can review this Q&A that is posted on www.NMMA.org/government and click on "Environmental and Safety" and choose the EPA tab.

Alternatively, NMMA Members who want more information about the new evaporative emission rules, can contact NMMA director of Environmental Safety & Compliance John McKnight at (202) 737-9757; jmcknight@nmma.org.

Do Canadian Boaters Have the Best Choices in Antifouling Bottom Paint?

THIS ALL STARTED when the Boating Industry Canada team was attending IBEX 2008, the International Boat Builders Exposition in October. We passed the display of one of the “big boys” in the marine paints and coatings industry and we stopped to say hello but also, to ask why they weren’t supporting their products with advertising in Canada.

“It’s a very tough regulatory environment and frankly, we just don’t see it being worthwhile pursuing the market that aggressively,” the fellow told us.

“So, are Canadian boaters being shortchanged here?” we asked. We wanted to learn more about his opinion but he blew us off saying, “That’s our position for the moment anyway gentlemen. Thanks for coming by.”

The conversation was certainly short if not sweet. Intrigued by his comments, we contacted some of the other companies that are supplying antifouling paints to the Canadian market. We came away hearing a couple of different positions in this. Interlux felt that Canadian boaters were well served with a broad range of antifouling products, while a spokesperson for Aquaguard felt that there were new products that we are not getting in Canada. Not yet at least.

Starting with Greg Devine at Aquaguard, we asked the question, how difficult is it to gain approval for your products?

“Canada is a tough regulatory environment, there’s no doubt about it,” Devine told us, “but it’s not just Canada. You have to expect that any time pesticides are involved, the government wants to proceed with caution.”

He went on to point out the irony of the antifouling business. “Antifouling paints are kind of an oxymoron; we all want something that’s safe for the environment but at the same time, products that effectively kills algae, barnacles and other undesirable organisms. You can see the challenge!” Nevertheless, Devine went on to tell us that his company was actively pursuing Canadian approval for a number of products.

One of their products has already been under evaluation for five years here in Canada and he described to us how after all that, the government came back and said they were going to extend one of the evaluation periods from 5 months to 12 months so the company had to resubmit their paperwork and they only had 90 days to do that.

At least the process in Canada is a national one. In the

United States, companies start by getting federal approval through the EPA but then they have to get a state approval for every state where they want to sell the product. Often, we’re told it’s a “rubberstamp” process for products that already have EPA approval but there is still paperwork to be filed and fees to be paid [in some cases substantial fees].

When we spoke to Fred Daoust and Bob Donat at International Paints who market the Interlux brands in Canada, they had a different view.

Bob Donat told us, “There’s lots of product range in Canada now. Canadian boat owners enjoy a wide range of colour choices and they even have choices in terms of ease of application and recoating so, we think that Canadian boaters are well served.”

Bob went on to explain that formulas (and therefore product names and price points) may differ widely, based on local requirements. A product that performs well in Canada might not be successful in South Florida and by the same token, products that work in South Florida may not be the best choice for Canadian freshwater boaters. He agreed that sometimes advertising appearing in American publications is confusing to Canadian buyers. He also acknowledged that Health Canada needs to approve all antifouling products sold in Canada and that Ottawa is not fast in granting those approvals.

Still, he didn’t feel that Canadian boat owners were at a disadvantage.

For smaller boats, bottom wax is an alternative but it tends to wear off requiring re-application during the season and that is impractical. Waxing a boat bottom is also a back-breaking task.

Few cottage or trailer boaters want the “look” of an antifouling bottom coat yet Zebra muscles and other factors are giving us warmer water and more algae that stains unprotected fiberglass. Some newer products contain wear-off qualities, eliminating the need to sand before re-coating, some products have Teflon and a few are water-based so they give off no VOC’s (volatile organic compounds).

The news for marina operators is that there are good solutions for your customers and selling bottom paints, particularly for smaller boats, is good for the boats as well as profitable for you.



Growth & Flexibility You Can Depend On

Canada's marine industry has a direct impact of \$15.6 billion* on our economy. As a market leader, Yamaha's outboard share continues to soar, increasing another 3% last year and our OEM partnerships now total an impressive 65. That's growth and flexibility you can count on. Whether it's outboards, personal watercraft or sport boats, trust your Yamaha partnership to deliver.

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What Kind of Yamaha Are You?

* Discover Boating Canada, The Economic Impact of Recreational Boating in Canada, 2006 Summary Report

