

10 Bristol Youth Complete Boat Building Work-Study Program at IYRS

Over the past 2 months, 10 youth from Mt Hope High School have built 2 handmade boats as part of a marine trades exposure program created by MY TURN and the International Yacht Restoration School (IYRS). The program was designed to give youth exposure to careers in and related to boat building while teaching them skills to enter the work force.



Youth were exposed to various elements of working in the marine industry from sailing and boat safety to teamwork and tool handling. This 5-week Summer Work and Learn program was made possible through a grant from the Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island. One of the Bevin's Skiffs built by these youth will be raffled off to raise funds to expand the program next year. The boat is a handmade 14-foot rowboat painted mint green with a handmade name sign on the back depicting "MINT-E". Raffle tickets to win the boat will be sold at the MY TURN Booth located under Tent A at the Newport Boat Show from

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Wendy Mackie, Executive Director of MY TURN in Rhode Island reported, “The youth learned more than the hard skills connected to boat building this summer. They also learned the softer skills connected to getting and keeping a job such as teamwork and good work ethics. These are the skills which are tougher to teach in a classroom.”

Many of the youth who participated in this summer program will be participating in Mt Hope High School’s year-round boat building program being implemented this fall. The program was created to prepare youth in the Bristol-Warren school district for full-time higher paying jobs in a sustainable industry in the area.

MY TURN is a community-based non-profit youth development agency working with 14 to 21 year-old in-school and out-of-school youth who are at a crossroad in their lives. MY TURN’s mission is to help youth develop goals, skills and confidence needed to transition successfully into post-secondary education or training and the world of work. MY TURN has a long history of working with employers, educational institutions, community agencies and families to provide education, work-based learning opportunities and jobs to youth. Since its inception in 1984, MY TURN has helped more than 22,000 youth further their education and obtain career-ladder jobs.

Summer camp gets youths job-ready

Sunday, August 24, 2008

By Andy Smith Journal Staff Writer

Alyssa Baker, 17, and Alvera Stridel, 16, both of Providence, landed summer jobs as counselors-in-training for the Providence After School Alliance, which has started a summer camp for middle school students this year. The alliance trained high school students to assist in leading the camp’s programs. According to Baker, the campers were more likely to listen to the high school counselors than they were to the older staffers.

Delia Boyle and Rachel Lessing, both 15-year-olds from Bristol, spent part of their summer building a small wooden boat called a Bevins skiff at the International Yacht Restoration School through a program called My Turn. “I liked it because it wasn’t a typical summer job. It wasn’t, like, monotonous. You get to do something different every day.”

Lessing said there were 10 people in the program, eight boys and two girls. They were divided into two teams, and each team built a skiff, which will be raffled off to help pay for next year’s program.

Mia Sounnakhone, 15, and Tiffany Fallin, both of Woonsocket, spent their summers with the RiverzEdge Arts Project in Woonsocket. Brad Fesmire, a former RISD grad student who runs the program, said the RiverzEdge serves about 110 kids annually, helping them explore painting, silk screening, digital photography and graphic



The Providence Journal / Sandor Bodo
Youth Workforce members, from left, Izzy Sanchez, Jean Merlain and Keith Scola at the Big Picture Soda Co., a student-run enterprise started at the Met School in 2006

design. This summer, about 20 students, among them Sounnakhone and Fallin, were at RiverzEdge as part of the state's Youth Workforce Development System.

"We pay the kids an educational stipend. We treat it like a job," Fesmire said. "It's half art skills, half job skills — and they have a good time."

Hector Collado, 18, of Pawtucket, was working as a certified nursing assistant for Lifespan Youth Employment, which is run by the Lifespan hospital system. He said the program allowed him to work as a CNA in a hospital setting. When the nine-week program is over, he said, he hopes to get a job at Rhode Island Hospital.

Brandon Melton, Lifespan's senior vice president for human resources, said the Lifespan system has hired about 28 percent of the 200 people who have participated in Lifespan Youth Employment over the past four years. Students and representatives from 29 of the programs participating in the state's Youth Workforce Development System gathered on Aug. 14 at the Buttonwoods Community Center in Warwick to showcase their accomplishments. The International Yacht Restoration School, for example, had poster boards with photos of students building their skiffs. RiverzEdge had displays of student artwork.

There were speeches. There was food. The 54 students on hand all received certificates of accomplishment. Lori Norris, chief of Youth Services for the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, said this was the first year the state had held a summer showcase for its youth work force programs. "We wanted to have a chance to celebrate what they learned, and recognize that it's no small feat," Norris said.

Norris said about 900 young people, between the ages of 14 and 24, take part in the summer jobs programs financed through the state Department of Labor and Training, with 38 different vendors running a total of 48 summer programs. This comes at a time when teenage employment is hitting historical lows. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the employment rate for teenagers 16 to 19 was about 33 percent in June, compared with about 50 percent in the 1950s.

Norris said that for every young person who found summer employment through the Youth Workforce Development System this year, there were 2.5 waiting to fill each slot.

The young workers get paid for their labor. Norris said participants receive an average of between \$600 and \$700 each summer. That money, she said, is often needed to help support families, or to buy back-to-school supplies. No matter what the money is used for, she said, the act of earning it can change the way young people regard their money.

"If the money comes from sweat equity, you become more thoughtful about how you spend it," she said. Norris said the primary goal of the youth work force system is to prepare people for employment. "This is a work program, not summer camp," she said. "It's not just altruistic programming. It gets them focused on the acquisition of skills that will allow them to transition into the work force."

Norris said there is value in having young workers hear from real employers, and finding out the kinds of careers they like — or don't like. The latter, she pointed out, can be just as important as the former.

The Youth Workforce Development Program in Rhode Island has grown dramatically since 2005. At that time, the program served 323 young people using a federal grant of \$1.5 million. There was one youth center in the state.

In program year 2006 (program years run from July 1 to June 30) the Governor's Workforce Board decided to expand the state's youth program, and provided \$600,000 for a pilot summer jobs program.

By 2007-08, the program had put together state and federal money totaling \$3.3 million. The number of youth centers had expanded from one to seven, and the program served 2,731 people with year-round programs, including summer jobs. In the current program year, 2008-09, the program has already allocated \$2.8 million and is in the process of awarding \$1.4 million more, for a total of \$4.2 million. The number of youth centers has grown to 13, and the youth workforce system will serve at least 4,100 people.

Additional financing comes from the community-based organizations that participate in the state's Youth Workforce Development System, about \$3.4 million in program year 2007-2008 and \$4.3 million in 2008-2009. During her speech at the Buttonwoods Community Center, Department of Labor and Training director Sandra Powell spoke of the transformation of the state's youth work force system.

As the gathering was breaking up, Keith Scola, 16, and Jean Merlain, 17, both of the Met School in Providence, were taking out a display for the Big Picture Soda Co., a student-run enterprise started at the Met School in 2006 that manufactures and markets soda. Merlain is the CEO. Scola is the chief financial officer. "I know my way around QuickBooks," he said, referring to an accounting software program.

Both executives wore matching polo shirts with the Big Picture Soda logo on it. Merlain said running the company is a year-round operation. During the school year, he said, they work on Big Picture Tuesdays and Thursdays. In the summers, they're at it full time, part of the state youth program.

Scola said he has his sights set on Bryant University, and an accounting career, after high school. "My passion is accounting," he said.

asmith@projo.com

Ten Mt. Hope students tackle boat building with an internship program

By Cindy VanSchalkwyk

Ten Mt. Hope High School students are spending several mornings a week in a huge brick-walled room, with a doorway large enough to fit a yacht. They are learning the basics of boat building at the International Yacht Restoration School in Newport.

Some of the students have been around boats before. But for most, building a boat is an entirely new experience.

"We're still kind of alien to this," David Pacheco said.

David is one of the 10, along with Delia Boyle, Rachel Lessing, Andre Costa, Cameron Siatkowski, Troy Durand, Ben Arruda, Nick Quintin, Jordan Sousa, and Brian Delomba.



Rich Dionne
Delia Boyle, a Mt. Hope high schooler, uses a plane to smooth one of the boats. Andre Costa works in the back.

The internship program is organized by MY TURN, a new program at Mt. Hope that offers practical help for students, including study skills and career training.

The five-week summer course is taught by Hank Drude, an instructor at IYRS. The Mt. Hope students, most of whom will be sophomores come September, began their five-week journey into boat building by learning the basics. They first created a cardboard model of the boat they plan to build, a wooden row boat. They also broke down the hundreds of steps in a boat building manual into manageable parts, with a project plan for each day. Three days a week they work at IYRS, and one day each week they go on a field trip that connects to the industry in some way.

So far we learned all the basics of the building and we learned how to apply it when we went sailing last Thursday,” Delia said.

The students have learned how to cut and bevel the ends of certain pieces that fit inside the boat by using a Japanese pull saw. They have put the parts together using marine screws, bronze ring nails and epoxy. Fixing problems as they come up is part of the challenge. Last Wednesday, the students had cut a brace to fit, a piece called a chine. Several students were checking its fit within the curve of the boat when the chine snapped near the middle.

“It’s a very important brace for the integrity of the hull. It’s better that it broke now than when it was out on the water,” Mr. Drude said.

It’s not the first problem the students have run into. The students are learning that it is sometimes necessary to backtrack to make the whole structure come together.

“You have to know which parts go where. It makes a difference if it’s not correct. We had to refit the center frame, Troy said.

The boats are rapidly taking shape, but there is still quite a bit of work to be done before they are finished. By the end of the program, the students should be able to take both rowboats they created out onto the water for a trial row. The plan is for the boats to then be put up for sale to help fund the program next year.

Guidance counselors get a careers refresher course

Sunday, August 10, 2008

By Andy Smith, Journal Staff Writer

Organizers from the Rhode Island School Counselors Association referred to recent sessions at Providence College as “speed dating.”

Only instead of singles trying to hook up, representatives of Rhode Island industries spent 20-minute sessions with groups of school guidance counselors, talking about what kinds of jobs are available.

About 65 counselors, who were attending the five-day summer institute, divided into groups and went from one classroom to the next, where they were greeted by representatives from the transportation, marine trade, information technology, tourism, manufacturing and biotech sectors.

The sessions were presented by the Rhode Island School Counselors Association and the Tech Collective, formerly the Rhode Island Technology Council, the state's technology industry association.

"How can we counsel students about what to do if we don't know what's out there ourselves?" said Belinda Wilkerson, a former counselor at East Providence High School who now works with the Rhode Island School Counseling Project, a joint initiative involving the state, Providence College and the counselor's association to provide technical assistance to school counselors.

"Kids want to stay in Rhode Island, for the most part, and we need to be aware of what opportunities are available for them. And we need to be able to show them the relevancy of what they're doing now to their future goals," she said.

Wilkerson said the sessions were intended to give counselors a brief idea of career opportunities in important job sectors throughout the state and to provide them with contact information so they can learn more. Jo Ann Johnson, of the Tech Collective, said it's important for employers in the state to share their work-force needs with school counselors, since the counselors are "in the trenches" when it comes to helping students develop career options.

Guidance counselors said many of their students have only the vaguest idea of what careers are all about. Elizabeth Fasteson, guidance department chairwoman at Shea High School in Pawtucket, said many students tell her they are interested in forensics, thanks to the popularity of the CSI shows on TV. "So I'll ask them if they like science and math, and they look at me and say," she said. "Huh?"



Rich Dionne
Lori Norris, chief of youth services at the Department of Labor and Training, gives a presentation at the workshop this month.

rock star. What he was, though, was "a classic geek" who owned five computers in high school and taught himself to program.

Curiously, Hebert said the IT industry is not necessarily looking for classic geeks.

At the information technology session, Tim Hebert, CEO of Atrion Networking Corporation, with about 140 employees and \$43 million in annual revenue, told counselors that the days of students graduating from high school, getting trained and keeping the same job for 40 years are long gone.

"Learning doesn't stop," he said. "You might have kids who say they can't wait to get out of high school because then they're done. That's not so at all."

Hebert showed a video about the dizzying pace of change in the technological world. The number of text messages sent every day, for example, exceeds the population of the planet. Hebert said he originally wanted to be a doctor — and worked as an emergency medical technician — and then a

“We don’t look for geeks. We look for kids who are well-rounded,” he said. “Kids who are bright, who can write, who can read, who can present themselves, who have problem-solving skills. Math is not really about numbers. It’s about problem solving ”

At the marine trades session, Karl Nordstrom, of New England Boatworks, and Wendy Mackie, executive director of My Turn Rhode Island, estimated there are 6,600 jobs in the marine trades sector, with another 2,400 needed in the next decade. The range of skills is a wide one, Mackie said, from painters and mechanics to designers and engineers.

“We are targeting the kid who might not necessarily want to go to college, but is still looking for a good job,” Nordstrom said. He described some of the advantages of working in the marine business — being near [or on] the water, a team atmosphere and a sense of accomplishment. “We’re not building widgets here,” he said. “It’s a part of you that you see out there on the water. And there’s usually something different going on every day. The variety, we find, really excites people.”

Nordstrom said the marine industry in the state has been working on building training programs, including those at the International Yacht Restoration School (IYRS), New England Institute of Technology (NEIT) and MotoRing Technical Training Institute (MTTI). “What we haven’t been able to do is target you,” he said, pointing at the guidance counselors in the room.

Donna Tobin, head of the guidance department at Pilgrim High School in Warwick and president-elect of the Rhode Island School Counselors Association, said the school guidance counselor should be the one person in a school who knows all the career avenues available.

“All kids say they want to go to college,” she said. “But I ask what they’re planning to do with it, what they want to get out of it . . . You don’t want to send a kid to college if it’s not going to help. Sometimes they need to find a career first, and then see how college is going to help them.”

It’s especially helpful, she said, for guidance counselors to know about job opportunities in Rhode Island. “Rhode Islanders like to stay here, or come back here,” she said. “A lot of kids still stay. They need to be educated in terms of technology. We’re still lacking in enough skilled workers to meet the needs of employers.” Tobin doesn’t think students are being asked to make career decisions too early. She thinks they aren’t thinking about potential careers early enough. “Students should be trained about careers from elementary school on,” she said.

Before the guidance counselors broke into small groups to go to their industry sessions, they all heard from Sandra Powell, director of the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, and Lori Norris, chief of youth services for the department. Powell told the guidance counselors that she started as a career counselor with the department, and she has always been interested in peoples’ paths to success.

“You all know Rhode Island’s situation is difficult,” she said, pointing to a 2.4-percent decline in employment over the past year. But downturns are cyclical, she continued, and Rhode Island is still projecting an increase of 54,000 jobs by 2016. What’s more, employers will need to fill more than 170,000 jobs in the state when you factor in impending retirements. About a third of those jobs, she said, will require a college degree.

As of June, she said, the top business sectors in the state were manufacturing, retail, professional and business services, government, and, at the top, health care. Of the 10 largest private companies in the state, four were hospitals, two were banks, and two (CVS and Shop & Stop) were in retail trade.

Norris said the Department of Labor and Training has revamped its youth services, and now has 13 youth centers serving 4,138 people. In five years, Norris said, the department hopes to serve 12,000. George McLaughlin, guidance counselor at Central Falls High School, requested that the state put one of its youth centers in Central Falls. "It's hard to get kids to leave Central Falls. To tell them to go to Pawtucket, it might as well be Hollywood."

asmith@projo.com

CRMC approves Tiverton largest marina

By Bruce Burdett

bburdett@eastbaynewspapers.com

TIVERTON — The state's Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) has voted its unanimous approval of what will become Tiverton's largest marina. In a half-hour session on July 22, the CRMC agreed to a somewhat-scaled down plan that will allow 74 slips at the three-acre Quality Yacht Services site at 95 Riverside Drive on the east side of Tiverton Basin.

In contrast to the rough sledding that has faced recent marina applications in Bristol, Block Island and elsewhere, this went relatively smoothly because, "we were able to work well with the neighbors," said Brad Waugh, owner of Quality Yacht Services along with his wife Kristin and brother-in-law Dean Soderberg (who once operated Ram Point Marina in Wakefield).

From nearly 90 slips, the plan diminished to 83 and then, after discussions with neighbors including the Tiverton Yacht Club, to 74. As part of that, the marina docks have been moved inward 35 feet from the boundary with neighbors both north and south to protect those neighbors' riparian rights. Neighbors were concerned that while the docks would not actually sit in front of their property, the maneuvering of boats into and out of the marina would be a problem.



Yachts tie up alongside the bulkhead at Quality Yacht Services in Tiverton. The new marina will extend 300 feet from here out into Tiverton Basin and should be complete by next spring.

Earlier, concerns had also been expressed by a Portsmouth resident who worried that the basin is at risk of being clogged with boat moorings. Marina backers argued that a marina is actually able to hold more boats in less space than moorings. The marina will displace three moorings, all of them already owned by Quality Yacht Services.

Mr. Waugh said it was the willingness of neighbors to sit down beforehand to voice concerns such as these that enabled agreements to be reached before the CRMC met.

"It was a productive process and we appreciate the neighbors' participation ... We think that good compromises were reached."

Boats will be quick to move in. Already, all but nine of the boat slips have been reserved, Mr. Waugh said.

Revised plans still show four main docks extending out from the existing waterfront bulkhead. The longest of these will stick out 300 feet into the river, reaching a point about 100 feet from the Tiverton Basin navigational channel. The marina is designed for boats ranging in size from 22 to 42 feet. The 300-foot "D" dock will be used for boats stopping in for work at Quality Yacht Services or for visiting boats.

With only a handful of lesser permits (such as one to demolish a couple of the property's existing buildings) left to clear, work should begin this fall with completion anticipated in time for next year's boating season. "We already have an assent from the Tiverton Harbor Commission. This permit (from CRMC) was the Mount Everest."

No dredging is needed — water depths there range from 12 to 48 feet.

The look of surviving buildings (one of which houses Ocean Options) will be improved with shingles and other changes, and the one new building — a 3,000 square foot marina office where the present fishing building stands — will also be shingled and designed to meet modern storm standards (with 'ballistic glass' and wash-through first floor).

The docks are being built in Finland and "will be floated over" sometime this fall. The outer two docks will be so-called wave and current "attenuators." Though well protected in most weather, "it can get sloppy" in a big wind, Mr. Waugh said, and the current flows through the basin at a good clip. To ease that impact, the 14-foot wide outer docks will extend down to a depth of six feet, providing a buffer against waves and current. And the docking system is unique for this area in that there will be no pilings. In part for aesthetics and in part for holding power, the marina intends to use a system that got its start in North Sea harbors whereby underwater anchors are essentially screwed into the bottom.

"To these would be secured nine-strand criss-cross pattern of what we call bungee cords — big, black, very heavy elastic straps and chain." The straps provide a shock absorbing effect and are designed to hold against a once-in-a-century storm with storm surge.

Marina features:

- * This will be the first marina in the state to provide marine toilet pumpout facilities at every slip.
- * At the request of the Tiverton Fire Department, a standpipe will be included — "it's like a fire hydrant on the dock."
- * A slip will be set aside for town rescue boat.
- * Fuel and transient pumpout will be provided.
- * Water, electricity, cable TV and internet will be available at each slip.
- * The property will have rest rooms, showers, exercise facility, washers and dryers.
- * The 40-ton travelift will remain, as will the boat repair operation.

Ships unloaded cargo there

They have yet to come up with a name for the marina although Anthony Point Marina, the historic name for the property, Barton Marina and several dozen other names have been suggested.

Much of the site is filled land, dating back to before it was used for the unloading of coal and of lumber for Humphrey's. Fishing boats have docked there off and on, and in the 1970s and '80s it was home to Shannon

Yachts' service facility. More recently, Quality Yacht Services, formerly owned by Mark Perry, did a wide range of repairs and upgrades to yachts there.

EPA Proposes Control Technology Guidelines for Boats

Last month, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed Control Technology Guidelines for recreational boatbuilders that, once finalized, will be used by the states to regulate air emissions from boat plants in 'non-attainment areas,' regions of the country identified to have air pollution levels in excess of the prescribed limit for one or more of six criteria pollutants: Ozone; carbon monoxide; nitrogen dioxide; sulfur dioxide; particulate matter; and lead.

For fiberglass boatbuilding, EPA has proposed that states require boat plants in non-attainment areas to comply with levels for hazardous air pollutants (HAP) in the boat Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT) regulation; however, this assumes that all volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are HAPs. VOCs are known to be the precursors to ozone pollution.

Although the majority of VOCs in resin and gel coat are HAPs, NMMA's main concern is that there can be additional, non-HAP VOCs in these materials.

Besides boat manufacturing, EPA has also proposed Control Technology Guidelines for industrial adhesives and plastic and metal parts coating operations, which includes marine manufacturing processes.

NMMA is working with resin manufacturers and the American Composites Manufacturing Association, as well as paint manufacturers and the National Paint and Coating Association to provide comments on these proposals, which will be submitted to EPA this week.

To download a copy of the EPA boat manufacturing Control Technology Guidelines, [CLICK HERE](#). For additional information, contact John McKnight at (202) 737-9757; jmcknight@nmma.org.

9 firms vie to plan future of Iway land



COURTESY R.I. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
THE PARCEL will become available for redevelopment as the Iway relocation of Route I-195 nears completion. State and city officials are preparing to weigh proposals from the nine firms that are seeking to plan the land's redevelopment.

By Susan A. Baird , PBN Web Editor

PROVIDENCE – Nine firms are competing for a chance to help plan the future of 19.2 acres of the city’s Jewelry District that are being freed up by the Iway project, the R.I. Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC) said today. A partnership to redevelop the property was announced in April by three entities intimately involved with the Interstate 195 relocation project: The RIEDC, the R.I. Department of Transportation (RIDOT) and the City of Providence.



Officials have said they will focus on projects that might serve as a hub for high-wage job growth. In a June interview, Mayor David N. Cicilline said “I will very strongly advocate for density and height, particularly as you come off the water.” But he told Providence Business News that he hopes to restrict height on parcels close to the river, “to preserve view corridors.”

“Partnering with the City of Providence and RIDOT on the I-195 relocation project is a key element of RIEDC’s Economic Growth Plan to create a stronger economy and grow new jobs,” Saul Kaplan, the RIEDC’s executive director, said in a statement today. “Outcomes from this assessment will help us optimize the value of the relocation property and achieve the economic development objectives of both the city and the state,”

The RIDOT will help cover costs associated with the production of the plan itself, his office said. In June, the RIEDC issued a request for proposals (RFP) seeking a vendor to perform a professional redevelopment and marketing analysis for the land. “The analysis will evaluate land-use solutions that maximize the economic and tax values of the relocation parcels and enhance the public use and enjoyment of the surrounding areas,” RIEDC spokesman Andy Cutler said in a statement this morning.

Submitting proposals before the July 31 deadline were:

- AKRF of New York City
- Basile Baumann Prost Cole and Associates of Annapolis, Md.
- Chan Krieger Sieniewicz of Cambridge, Mass.
- Colliers Meredith & Grew of Boston
- Costas Kondylis and Partners of New York City
- Economics Research Associates of New York City
- GLC Development Resources of Boston
- HR&A Advisors of New York City
- W-ZHA of Annapolis

Their RFPs will be weighed by a selection committee that includes representatives of each member of the state-city partnership: Kaplan, the leader of the RIEDC; Michael P. Lewis, executive director of the RIDOT; and Thomas E. Deller, director of planning for the City of Providence.

The final selection is to be made next month, the RIEDC said today.

“Years from now,” Kaplan said, “we will look at our capital city’s new skyline and see proof that the relocation plan was a game-changing opportunity for our economy.”

The R.I. Economic Development Corporation is a quasi-public agency established to promote business development, preservation and expansion in the state and undertake port projects in Rhode Island. Additional information, including the agency's 2008 Growth Plan, is available at www.riedc.com. Information about the R.I. Department of Transportation and its Iway project is available at www.dot.ri.gov/projects/construction and www.pineapplestudios.com. News and information about the City of Providence and its Department of Planning and Development is available at www.ProvidencePlanning.org.

Boaters feel pinch of fuel costs

By Bridget Botelho PBN

Contributing writer

Boaters in Rhode Island are offsetting rising fuel costs by cutting back on splurges, using moorings instead of expensive dock space and enjoying life on the water closer to home.

Boater Scott Leigh, who owns a boat service and repair company called Scott's Boat Service in West Warwick, said



PBN PHOTO / BRIAN McDONALD

PUSHING ALONG: Scott's Boat Service owner Scott Leigh, with his \$60,000 investment – a craft for pulling moorings from the bay's bottom.

there appear to be fewer boats out on the water this season than in previous years. And those that do take their boats out are using fuel conservatively.

“People are going out on their boats, but are not going out far,” Leigh said. “My boat burns 22 gallons per hour – so at \$5 a gallon, that is \$110 [per hour]. It’s a lot of money. So if we are going any real distance, we’ll just stay overnight.” Some of his customers made the decision not to put their boats in the water this season because fuel prices are too high, Leigh said, and others waited a bit longer than usual to put their boats in.

Boaters who couldn’t bear the thought of not being on the water all summer have sought out cheaper ways to keep them in, like using a mooring slightly offshore instead of a dock slip.

The high cost and limited availability of dock space has been a persistent issue in Rhode Island over the years. In response, the demand for moorings – which cost a fraction of what a dock slip costs – has grown, Leigh said. In Warwick, for instance, a mooring license costs only \$150 per year, but to dock his 32-foot Carver Yacht in Warwick, it would cost more than \$3,000 per year, he said.

Leigh, who also works as a mooring inspector for the town of East Greenwich, said he saw the demand for moorings picking up, so he expanded his boat service and repair business to include setting, moving and inspecting moorings. So far, the mooring part of his business – dubbed The Mooring Man – has been strong; over the past few months he has quoted more than 50 mooring jobs, installed about 10 moorings, and sold about 15 mooring rigs in East Greenwich, Warwick and North Kingstown.

“I’m getting a lot of calls for moorings, because it is a much cheaper option,” said Leigh. Moorings are so popular that the waiting list for a mooring in East Greenwich is now about four years for residents, and about twice that for out-of-towners, according to the office of the town harbor master. Newport Harbormaster Tim Mills said that the waiting list for a mooring in Newport is now about 400-people deep – residents have to wait five to eight years, while nonresidents may be waiting for up to 10 years. The long wait is driven by a couple factors.

Dock space is limited and not likely to grow soon. And, said Mills, “recreational boating has grown and the size of boats have, too.”

“Twenty years ago, the average boat was about 20 feet, and now it is 40 feet,” he said. “That puts a pinch on the amount of space available in the moorings fields and on the piers.”

As a result, the cost of pier-side space has gone up significantly in the past five years. As for boaters already with dock slips, they are offsetting the cost of fuel by staying closer to home. Derek Leigh, a relative of Scott Leigh who sells boats for Boat World in Warwick, also owns a boat docked at Greenwich Bay Marina in Warwick. He said Rhode Island boaters have the advantage of being able to enjoy the water without traveling very far and wasting fuel.



PBN PHOTO / BRIAN McDONALD
SCOTT LEIGH SAYS that the cost of moorings is increasing alongside the demand for them, with boaters now paying as much as \$3,000 to moor a yacht in Warwick.

“I went to Prudence Island on [July 6], spent 10 hours there and only used one hour of run time on the boat. That day it only cost me about \$35 dollars in fuel,” Leigh said. “Yes, I run my boat a little slower, and I do not take as many trips, but I am a boater, so I will cut back on going out to dinner three nights a week if I need to.” He takes his 25-foot Trophy center console to Block Island for vacation every year and, like most boaters vacationing there, anchors the boat for the whole trip.

“A full-week vacation on Block Island only takes about three hours of run time to get there and back, so it is a lot cheaper than taking the family to Disney for a week,” Leigh said.

Robin Emin, who has owned a boat with her husband for three years, said filling their 30-foot boat’s 150-gallon fuel tank at \$4.66 per gallon costs \$699. Even so, they are using their boat about the same amount of time as previous years, albeit at a slower pace, she said.

“It’s our vacation on the water and it’s a getaway every weekend. It’s still cheaper than the cost of most flights today, and I don’t have to worry about getting stuck on a runway for hours or dealing with lost luggage or airports in general,” Emin said.

Rhode Islander and boater David Rush shares the diehard-boater sentiment and said he refuses to forgo the enjoyment of boating. Instead, he offsets the cost of fuel by cutting out other splurges.

“We value family fun and good times over life’s pains and agonies. Not to belittle the problem of rising gas prices, but it is how we react to life’s challenges that determines the sort of people we are,” Rush said. “For example, maybe my wife and I choose not to have an appetizer and dessert with our dinner, but we will still pull up to the restaurant on the water and enjoy the ride there and back. Rhode Island has the best sunsets from the water, and for us that is worth sacrificing the calamari starter.”

Kelly Space & Technology Awards Prototype Production Contract to Goetz Custom Boats for Advanced Armor

WARWICK, RI (August 6) – Kelly Space & Technology, Inc. announced today it has awarded a contract to Bristol, Rhode Island-based Goetz Custom Boats for prototype.

Best known for their America’s Cup boats, Goetz’s involvement in the grand-prix sailing world has enabled it to develop a sophisticated in-house production and engineering capability that has been applied to a wide variety of projects in the aerospace, architectural and alternative energy industries.

“The prototype production work performed by Goetz will provide key inputs for our company’s manufacturing and business considerations at our Rhode Island operations which was established earlier this year to commercialize our armor technology,” said Karen V. West, Executive Vice President and CFO of Kelly Space & Technology, Inc. “We are pleased to be working with one of the leaders of Rhode Island’s marine industry. Goetz’s unerring attention to detail, coupled with its knowledge of handling and utilizing advanced materials, were key factors in our selection.”

The new ballistic protection system is expected to be ready for deployment in 2009.

In April 2008, Kelly announced the establishment of its East Coast operations in Rhode Island citing the State's prominent marine and defense industry as well as programs such as the Business Innovation Factory (BIF) that facilitates private and public sector cooperation.

Centered at its Aerospace Research & Development Center in San Bernardino, California, Kelly Space has developed a lightweight polymer-based ballistic protection system that is capable of being molded into any shape for a wide variety of applications, and possesses substantial weight-strength advantages over leading ballistic armor products. Incorporating Kelly Space's ballistic protection material into subsystems, such as watercraft hulls, significantly increases buoyancy and will cost-effectively offer virtually any desired level of ballistic protection.

Kelly Space & Technology, Inc. is a privately held aerospace, energy and homeland security technology company based at the San Bernardino International Airport in California (former Norton Air Force Base), and an East Coast operation located in Rhode Island. For more information, visit www.kellyspace.com
Goetz Custom Boats is has been in business in Rhode Island since 1975, and is internationally known for its high-tech composites work, particularly in the grand prix sailing world. For more information, visit www.goetzboats.com

Contact: Jason Lee, Kelly Space & Technology, Inc., Director of Operations, at (909) 382-2010;
jlee@kellyspace.com

NMMA, Sail America agree to new partnership

Friday, 01 August 2008 00:00

The National Marine Manufacturers Association and Sail America have restructured their affiliation agreement. Under the new partnership, Sail America will continue to function as a separate legal entity and will maintain its own dedicated staff, board of directors and committees.

Sail America will be responsible for endorsing and promoting sail-focused boat shows, developing outreach programs to promote the sailing lifestyle and running seminar programs at all Strictly Sail shows and SailFests. It also will provide content and support for Discover Boating and help develop funding models to increase sailing's contribution to the Grow Boating Initiative.

Sail America will continue to own Strictly Sail Pacific, but all boat show operations will be managed by the NMMA. The NMMA will be responsible for managing and producing Strictly Sail Chicago, Strictly Sail Miami, Strictly Sail Pacific, and SailFest events at the Virginia In-Water Boat Show, the Liberty Boat Show, and the Baltimore Boat Show.

“This new arrangement allows Sail America to provide a dedicated focus on the needs of the sailing industry, while at the same time expanding our reach and capabilities,” said Bill Goggins, president of Sail America and commercial director of Harken, in a statement.

Under the new agreement, the NMMA will pay Sail America a share of sailing-related revenue from the NMMA-owned boat shows and will provide Sail America with access to its staff and resources in the areas of membership support, marketing communications and government relations.

“From NMMA’s perspective, this is a win-win situation,” said the NMMA’s president Thom Dammrich, in a statement. “The new partnership better utilizes existing resources and expertise of both NMMA and Sail America and will serve to increase visibility of sailing.”

For information about the new Sail America/NMMA affiliation, contact Sail America executive director Jonathan Banks at (401) 841-0900; jbanks@sailamerica.com ; or the NMMA’s vice president of marketing and communications Carl Blackwell at (312) 946-6277; cblackwell@nmma.org .

Wastenews.com

It’s a wrap: Recycling program aids marinas

Chrissy Kadleck

Imagine having to bury the sheer volume of material it would take to cover Ohio's 312-mile Lake Erie coast with an 8.6-foot-wide strip of plastic.

Without the state's boat shrink-wrap recycling program, the more than 230 tons of plastic diverted during the 2006 and 2007 boat “unwrapping seasons” would have found its way to the landfill.

Boat shrink-wrap — low-density polyethylene, or LDPE — is commonly used for protecting recreational boats stored outside during the winter season from snow, ice, water and debris. The plastic encloses the boat by shrinking when heated, providing a protective covering strong enough to hold the weight of snow and ice. In the spring, used shrink-wrap is often discarded and ends up in landfills.

Ohio is one of several states working to recycle the one-time-use plastic, which has proved challenging for marinas for years, said Dave Kelch, program administrator for Ohio Clean Marinas.

“It’s nice to look out in the wintertime and see all of these boats covered with blue and white plastic, but in the spring when it comes off, it creates huge mounds of piles, and it’s a big mess for marinas,” Kelch said. “It’s unsightly, and they have to pay more dollars to get it removed. It’s costing them money, space, and it’s costing our environment.”

In spring 2006, the Ohio Clean Marinas Program joined forces with Mondo Polymer Technologies Inc. of Reno, Ohio, to begin a two-year pilot program. It resulted in the company collecting thousands of pounds of boat shrink-wrap from about 70 marinas and businesses along the Lake Erie coastline and converting the material into polymer highway guardrail blocks, said Ron Wesel, the company's materials acquisition manager.

Wesel said Mondo Polymer now works with five states — Ohio, Michigan, New York, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania — collecting the discarded boat wrap. The company dispatches drivers to collect the blue and white shrink-wrap from marinas and boatyards throughout the five states. After packing the material into large garbage trucks, they take it to a centrally located area in that state to have it baled. It is then picked up by tractor-trailer and brought back to the Ohio plant to be shredded, melted and formed into guardrail blocks — the blocks that hold the rails to the posts.

“Last year we collected about 400,000 pounds, and that was just in Ohio and Michigan,” he said, adding that the company uses 50,000 pounds of materials a day. LDPE can also be used to manufacture lawn edging, plastic banners, decking and benches. “The boat wrap project is a good filler to keep the price down on the materials,

and it has just grown dramatically over the last couple of years. This year, with the other states, we'll probably get close to a million pounds."

Massachusetts was ahead of the curve, initiating a similar recycling program in 2003. Since its inception, more than 200 tons of white marine shrink-wrap has been collected and recycled from the north and south shores of Boston, in southern Massachusetts, on Cape Cod and on Martha's Vineyard.

Leona Roach, executive director of Massachusetts Marine Trades Association, estimated that 150 of the 300 members statewide offer some level of shrink-wrap services.

"Marinas and boatyards, being coastal businesses, are very concerned and very sensitive to being good environmental stewards," Roach said. "They were all disposing of this material in the past and paying lots of money to crate it away, and this gave them an opportunity to save money and do the right thing."

The Rhode Island recycling effort was launched in 2005 with a grant from Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corp., a quasi-state agency that runs the landfill, said Lisa DiRaimo, executive director of Rhode Island Marine Trades Association, or RIMTA.

According to a report issued in August 2005 detailing the first year of the pilot program, RIMTA estimated that for the 2004-2005 wrapping season, approximately one million pounds of marine shrink-wrap was sold for use in Rhode Island.

That massive amount presented a significant disposal concern and recycling opportunity to keep the material out of the waste stream.

More than 350,000 pounds of shrink-wrap has been diverted from landfills in the state since the program began with 15 marinas and companies. In 2008, more than 50 marinas and companies participated and have collected 106,968 pounds of shrink-wrap, nearly double the amount collected the first year.

Grant Westerson, executive director of the Connecticut Marine Trades Association, said he would love to have a boat shrink-wrap recycling program established by January 2009 in time to collect the discarded wrappings from the new boats delivered to the Hartford Boat and Fishing Show.

"Frankly, it's to our advantage because it costs us a lot of money to dispose of that," he said. "Everybody in the marine industry is a waterfront property owner, and the one thing that you know is that you don't make a mess out of your own backyard. Developing more and more trash for the landfills is not something that we are interested in doing. We're interested in reusing or recycling or eliminating. If we can take shrink-wrap and recycle it so it can be used for something beneficial, that's a big plus for us."

Contact Waste News correspondent Chrissy Kadleck at ckadleck@sbcglobal.net.

Posted Aug 4, 2008 PBN

FOCUS: EAST BAY/NEWPORT COUNTY

Newport holding its own this summer despite economy

By John Larrabee
Contributing Writer

Evan Smith is the president and CEO of Newport County Convention & Visitor's Bureau. He recently spoke with Providence Business News about the current tourism season in Newport, one of New England's top summer destinations. PBN: Tell us about early summer returns on the tourism season.

SMITH: Some of the numbers we have in through June show we're having a reasonably good season – not record-setting, certainly, but in light of the economy, reasonably well. There are peaks and valleys that parallel what's happening nationally. The economy has been a problem. It cannibalizes money from people's wallets that they would otherwise spend on vacationing.

Weather is still the largest single element that affects us. The financial difference between a sunny forecast and a rainy forecast can cost the local economy hundreds of thousands of dollars. We need good weather for all the August and September weekends to do well.

PBN: How have gasoline prices and the slow economy affected the season?

SMITH: A new trend has emerged - Thursday is the new Friday. This summer a lot of people are starting the weekend a day early. They're taking four-day vacations instead of a seven-day week. It's not the result of any promotion, it just evolved. Travelers are staying closer to home, and for Newport, that's good, because for 12-million Americans we're within a three-hour drive. People are re-acquainting themselves with their own backyard. They are rediscovering Rhode Island and Newport.

Something else we've noticed is that performance is up for hotels in Middletown. The mid-priced national chains – Hampton Inn, Howard Johnson's, Courtyard by Marriott, Holiday Inn Express – they're all in Middletown, and they're all going slightly better than last year, while hotels in Newport are showing a slight decline.

PBN: But it sounds as though there are also some positive things happening.

SMITH: Yes. For one thing, we've had a record-high number of European visitors to America this summer, because the Euro dollar and the British pound so strong right now. In Newport, that number is up 6.75 percent. Weddings are another strong market. In the summer we average about 20 weddings each weekend. The booking trend is very strong, although we are seeing brides scaling down on the total budget.

Events are one of the things that have helped stabilize Newport through thick and thin – the tennis tournaments, the regattas and the music festivals. They're all doing well.

PBN: Earlier this year there were predictions of a labor shortage in some resort areas because the federal government refused to grant seasonal work visas to workers from overseas. How was that resolved?

SMITH: When the season began we thought the loss of the H-2B visas would be our No. 1 problem, but it's become less of an issue, for several reasons. First, because we got early notification that we would not be



PHOTO COURTESY NCCVB

DESPITE AN UNFAVORABLE economic picture, NCCVB President Evan Smith said the region's tourism and hospitality sector is performing "reasonably" well.

getting the visas, the hotels and other businesses had time to prepare. They held job fairs and used their resources to recruit new employees. Secondly, because of the slow economy more local workers need jobs.
PBN: Any predictions for the fall season?

SMITH: The fall forecast right now is very strong — with cruise ships, with motor coaches and with business travel. We're going to see cruise ship arrivals grow by 10 percent this year, from 27 to 30, which will bring an additional 16,000 passengers into Newport.

PBN: What about business travel?

SMITH: The trend in the meetings industry is short-term bookings involving smaller groups. Planners are paying close attention to their budgets. They're more conscious of hotel room rates, and especially the costs associated with functions and events. Of course, rising travel costs mean they're planning regional meetings rather than national ones, and that benefits Newport because of our location and the concentration of businesses within a 200- to 300-mile radius.

PBN: Have government budget woes affected your bureau directly?

SMITH: We get 84 percent of our funding from the lodging tax. Overall, in Newport County lodging tax revenue is down 1 percent. That's not too bad, but if the trend continues it will lead to budget cuts. These are difficult economic times. Everyone could be throwing in the towel and saying, 'Hey, we're going to have a bad year,' but they're not. I'm really proud of the optimism and innovation shown by the Newport County hospitality industry. We're making the best of what are not the best times. •

Navy to give up 384 acres on Aquidneck Island

By Ted Nesi
PBN Staff Writer

NEWPORT – The U.S. Navy has declared that it no longer needs 384 acres of prime coastland on the west side of Aquidneck Island, preparing the way for the land to be acquired by local communities for use as public spaces and private developments.

The Aquidneck Island Planning Commission has spent the past eight years preparing for the land's post-Navy development, with a focus on maintaining the island's quality of life, creating sustainable economic development opportunities, protecting the environment and providing public access to Narragansett Bay.

Included in the 384 acres the Navy says it no longer needs are:

- 269 acres that comprise the sites of four former storage tank farms along the Defense Highway (also known as Burma Road) in Portsmouth.



PBN FILE PHOTO / RYAN T. CONATY
THE DECISION to declare the 384 acres "excess land" was made last summer by senior officials in Washington, D.C., according to Capt. Michel T. Poirier, commanding officer of Naval Station Newport, who announced the plan during a briefing at the base.

- 67 acres of the Defense Highway, running from Portsmouth into Middletown, which the island’s West Side Master Plan envisions using as a second north-south route that would be called “Shoreline Drive.”
- 35 acres of back yards behind Navy housing in the Melville area of Portsmouth.
- 10 acres, three of which are under water, at the site of the former Navy hospital in Newport.
- 3 acres on the site of the former Navy Lodge, at West Main Road and Coddington Highway in Middletown.



COURTESY AQUIDNECK ISLAND PLANNING COMMISSION

10 ACRES at the former Navy hospital in Newport – a site targeted for redevelopment in the AIPC West Side Master Plan – are included in the acreage the Navy plans to give up, along with parcels in Portsmouth and Middletown.

The announcement was made yesterday by Capt. Michel T. Poirier, the commanding officer of Naval Station Newport, during a briefing for reporters at the naval station. But the decision to officially declare the 384 acres as “excess land” was made by senior officials at a June 2007 meeting in Washington, D.C.

Navy officials said they based their decision in part on the West Side Master Plan, a 350-page development strategy for the western portion of Aquidneck Island to which local, state and federal officials agreed in 2005. They also took into account the major renovations now under way at the 1,397-acre naval base, to make possible the program consolidations called for under the federal Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Act of 2005.

The Aquidneck island communities hope to secure all or nearly all of the Navy’s excess land, although other government agencies will get the first shot at acquiring it if they can demonstrate a clear need. The communities will need to establish a local redevelopment authority and conduct community outreach sessions in order to take over the land, officials said.

A redevelopment plan for the area should be submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development by next August, Gregory Preston, the Northeast program manager for the BRAC Office, said in a separate presentation. After that, a National Environmental Policy Act analysis of the land must be conducted, and the Navy must undertake any environmental cleanup that is found to be necessary.

The land can be acquired by the new owners after the environmental work is completed, Preston said. He did not offer a date when that takeover might occur.

In an e-mail interview on Friday, Aug. 1, the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission’s executive director, Tina Dolen, praised the Navy’s decision.

“The Navy has charted a course that clearly strengthens its position in Newport and that will have very positive repercussions for both the local and state economy,” Dolen told Providence Business News.

“The release of 384 acres presents a remarkable opportunity for the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission and its community partners (Newport, Middletown and Portsmouth) to implement the commission’s West Side Master Plan, which lays out collaboratively designed reuse plans for that acreage.”

The only drawback she sees to the Navy plan is the lack of a throughway along the Navy’s Simonpietri Drive to Coddington Highway. That absence, Dolen said, poses “a formidable challenge for the Shoreline Drive concept.”

Naval Station Newport is home to more than 40 naval and defense commands and activities, from the historic Naval War College to the technologically advanced Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division Newport. For more information, visit www.nsnpt.navy.mil.

The Aquidneck Island Planning Commission is a joint municipal planning commission – enabled by state legislation and created by resolutions of the Towns of Portsmouth and Middletown and the City of Newport – that includes officials from all three Aquidneck Island communities and from Naval Station Newport. For more information, visit www.aquidneckplanning.org.

Posted Aug 1, 2008

MARINE INDUSTRY

DEM awards \$235,726 in pump-out station grants

By Jessica Chavira

PBN Staff Writer

PROVIDENCE – The R.I. Department of Environmental Management has awarded nearly a quarter of a million dollars in 12 grants to help keep the waters of Narragansett Bay cleaner. The money will help buy three pump-out boats, add four stationary pump-out locations and upgrade five existing boats or stationary facilities. The grants are funded by the federal Clean Vessel Act pump-out grant program, which is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. They require a 25-percent local match.

To date, the DEM has awarded more than \$1 million in grants to pump-out facilities, the result of the 1998 “no discharge” designation by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, in which Rhode Island became the first state in the nation to prohibit boaters from discharging sewage into its waters. An estimated 54,000 boats use Rhode Island waters each year.

Grants for 2008 include:

- \$56,250 to the Town of North Kingstown to purchase a new pump-out boat to serve Wickford Harbor, Allen Harbor and the West Passage.
- \$52,735 to Norton’s Shipyard and Marina Inc. of East Greenwich for a new pump-out boat to service its facilities and Greenwich Cove and Greenwich Bay.
- \$15,000 to Old Port Marine in Newport to buy a new pump-out boat to service Newport Harbor.
- \$15,000 to Barrington Yacht Club for a new stationary pump-out facility to service the Barrington River.
- \$15,000 to Pleasant Sea View Inc. of Warwick for a new stationary pump-out facility to service Warwick Cove.
- \$15,000 to Quality Yacht Services of Tiverton for a new stationary pump-out facility to service Tiverton and the Sakonnet River.

- \$15,000 to Stone Cove Marina of Wakefield for a new stationary pump-out facility to service Point Judith Pond.
- \$15,000 to the Town of New Shoreham for renovation of a pump-out boat that services Block Island.
- \$12,928 to New England Boat Works Inc. of Melville for replacement of its pump-out facility.
- \$8,325 to the Town of Bristol to replace its pump-out facility at Rockwell Pier that services Bristol Harbor.
- \$7,875 to Brewers Greenwich Bay Enterprises Inc. of East Greenwich for replacement of a stationary pump-out facility that services Greenwich Bay.
- \$7,613 to Goat Island Marina of Newport for replacement of a stationary pump-out facility.

To learn more about the R.I. Department of Environmental Management and its Office of Water Resources, visit www.dem.ri.gov. For additional information about the local Clean Vessel pump-out grant program, call the DEM's Joseph Migliore at 222-3961, ext. 7258, or e-mail him at joseph.migliore@dem.ri.gov.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is a bureau of the U.S. Department of the Interior. Additional information about the bureau's Northeast regional office and its Clean Vessel Act Grant Program is available at www.fws.gov.

Holby Marine ready to expand

By Kevin Shalvey
PBN Staff Writer

Holby Marine Co. in Bristol recently earned the town's approval to expand its 10,000-square-foot, boat-manufacturing facility to include other businesses. It's an attempt to create an all-purpose marine center, though not the company's first expansion.

Three years after it was founded in 1984 – in a 3,400-square-foot building in the former Herreshoff Manufacturing Co.'s complex in Bristol – the company built its own facility at 97 Broad Common Road, where it still operates.

Although Holby has been building sailboats since its inception – the company's boats have won Sailing World magazine's Boat of the Year award twice – it has recently become increasingly focused on its line of powerboats, said founder and President W. Barrett Holby Jr. Those powerboats are the 18-, 20- and 24-foot Pilot series and the 17-foot Bristol Skiff. The first of the Pilot series – designed by Canada's Mark Ellis Design – hit the water in 1999. This year, Holby will build about eight 24-foot Pilots and another 10 20-foot Pilots. But those sales levels are not quite where the company wants them to be, Holby said.

“The economy is down, for sure, so we've had a slow time since about this time last year,” Holby said. “We're still busy, but we don't have the backlog that we'd like to have at this point in the year.”

The 24-foot model, complete with a canvas roof and all the necessary electronics – installed at Holby – costs about \$150,000, Holby said.

And while sales of the Pilot series are affected by the economy, the company's 17-foot Bristol Skiff, which at \$20,000 is the company's lowest-priced boat, is a far better indicator of the overall financial market, Holby said.



PBN PHOTO/MARY LAUZON

HOPE FLOATS: Holby Marine Co. owner W. Barrett Holby Jr., shown here in the firm's production area, said that slowing sales of the 17-foot Bristol Skiff often serve as a harbinger of a slumping stock market.

“The skiff is kind of like the canary in the mine,” Holby said. “When sales of it slow down, a few months later the stock market slows down. And when it picks up, the stock market does.”

He added that sales of the skiff had been down through the spring, but have now starting to pick up. Those boats normally sell during March and June, with a few sold in July. “They’re actually picking up now, which is a little bit surprising to us. We’re still selling them this year, and we’re now approaching August,” Holby said. Holby will manufacture about 40 skiffs this year, he said.

The company has also, in an effort to move outside the marine industry, created another product line: fiberglass-based bulkheads for houses. Those designs, called Clam Door bulkheads for their slightly-rounded shape, were introduced in 1994.

“We thought it would be good to diversify the business,” Holby said last week. “And we saw that the metal bulkhead doors really rust out, they don’t last long, especially in areas along the New England coast.” Initially, the flagship product of the company were the Holby line, which were the Holby Clearwater 35 and the Clearwater 36, which were awarded Boat of the Year honors in 1993 and 1999, respectively. Holby then started to produce the Quest series, designed by Newport’s Rodger Martin Yacht Designs.

“They’re a smaller boat and I have to say the problem with them is that they’re very well built, so they’re a little expensive,” Holby said. With a full sail and electronics package, they cost about \$180,000. “And it’s not made to be shown off at a yacht club, like a Hinckley yacht might be – that you own this and it’s a special thing,” he said. “It’s expensive in that it’s all composites and those composites are expensive ...It’s a real sailor’s cruiser racer, and that market it fairly thin, I’d say.”

The last Quest 33 was delivered in 2002. Now Holby is looking to “reintroduce it, making a few changes ... that could bring the price down.”

Holby says the company already has “two people interested, two strong commitments,” to locate in the planned marine center, though he wouldn’t name names.

Along with bringing other companies into its Bristol facility, Holby also wants to grow the repair aspects of his business. He now reconstructs about two or three boats each year. Holby chose Rhode Island to operate his business because it had the highest-quality local work force. Now, Florida and Maine facilities are producing boats that rival the quality of Rhode Island boat makers. And rising property values in Bristol and the surrounding areas have made “it harder for workers to live in the area,” he said.

Still, Holby has kept the attrition rate low. And he proudly notes that a few workers have been with the company since 1985.

“We have a core group who’ve been here for a long time.”

Company profile: Holby Marine Co.

Owner: W. Barrett Holby Jr.

Type of Business: Boat manufacturer

Locations: 97 Broad Common Road, Bristol

Employees: 13

Year Established: 1984

Annual Sales: WND

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Comments or articles for submission, contact Lisa A. DiRaimo @ 401.615.5419 or ldiraimo@cox.net

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