



Local retailers rev up for the 23rd Annual Boat Show

The winds may be howling outside, but from Thursday, Feb. 13, through Sunday, Feb. 16, winter in northern Lower Michigan won't prevent people from looking ahead to the sunny, warm days of summer at the 23rd Annual Boat Show held at the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa in Acme. "This is the number one boat show in northern Michigan," said Jim Trierweiler, president of the Grand Traverse Marine Dealers Association and representative from Elk River Marina in Elk Rapids. "We'll have dealers from all over northern Michigan participating, including those from Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska and Leelanau counties. It's a huge event showcasing the best of the best in boating."

The show, hosted by the Grand Traverse Marine Dealers Association and put on by the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce, is expected to draw a crowd of 5,000 — and show organizers have made it an event to remember.

"We really worked hard to bring in new products and a wider variety of services," said Pat Hobson, manager of operations and customer service at the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce. "Of course, there will be boats — lots of them — but this year, we're also bringing representatives from newer area marinas, dock companies, banks, global and marine insurance companies, canvas companies and many more. Boating is a great

lifestyle and we're trying to put as many boating items under one roof as possible."

As far as boats go, the show is definitely geared toward power boating. Everything from cruisers, fishing boats and runabouts to wake boarding boats, personal watercraft and pontoon boats will be there and the newest industry trends will also be on display.

"There are some great new innovations in engines and graphics, as well as overall easier boating maintenance," said Paul Leman, sales manager, at Long Lake Marina in Traverse City. "As far as engines go, it's a gentler, cleaner world.

Manufacturers have used new technology to create proven and environmentally friendly engines to reduce emissions, without sacrificing the horsepower. Plus, boats are literally turnkey. Now, people can head down to the dock or marina, step into their boat, turn the key and prepare for a great day on the water. It's a lot easier than the fussing that used to have to happen."

Area dealers have really improved their ability to work with newer engines, as well. The majority are trained to work on new outboard and fuel injected engines.

In addition to engine improvements, manufacturers are offering new color schemes, including yellow.

"If you like flashy colors, this year's yellow definitely offers it," added Leman. "This yellow is more tasteful than other yellows have been



Jim Trierweiler is president of the Grand Traverse Marine Dealers Association and a representative from Elk River Marina in Elk Rapids.

in the past and manufacturers are using it as more of an accent with other colors. The new graphics and gel coats continue to be improved also."

Easier maintenance is yet another new perk highlighted at this year's show. According to Leman, manufacturers have made snap-out carpeting, more fade-resistant gel coats and coated vinyl to help keep boaters where they belong: on the water.

With all of these new innovations and such a wide variety of boats, it's easy to see

why boating is so popular.

"For years, the trend in boating popularity has gone up," said Trierweiler. "Plus, with the population of northern Michigan growing, more people are being introduced to — and getting hooked on — boating. It's really to people's advantage to attend the Boat Show. It's an opportunity to see a lot of boats and products, and talk with very knowledgeable staff."

For more information on the Boat Show, contact Pat Hobson at 947-5075.

Admission:
\$3 per person
Children 12 & under free

Thursday is Senior Day
62 & over
two for price of one

For more information
contact the
TC Chamber
of Commerce
at 947-5075

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