

Free seminars a highlight at this year's boat show

When you visit the Northern Michigan Boat Show & Sale, you can expect to find boats, of course.

You can attend a number of free seminars, courtesy of Matteson Marine North, on a wide range of topics related to using and getting the most out of them.

Boating education has become a valued part of what the annual show offers its guests, says Liz Carney of Grand Bay Marine (GBM), the local dealer who is serving as the event's presenting sponsor. Whether you're a seasoned boater or a novice, Carney believes that those who take advantage of such opportunities that exist to learn more about the sport will find their time on the water greatly enhanced.

"From local classes on water safety to going online, there are a lot of different ways to become more educated," she said. "And when you take the time to do that, you're making an investment in the time you'll be spending on the water."

With a substantial number of boating experts all gathered under one roof for the Boat Show & Sale, Carney says that offering classes is a natural extension of the kind of information that is shared one-on-one between a consumer and a marine professional.

"People who work in this business are generally very well-trained and have a genuine interest in and excitement about sharing the knowledge we have," said Carney. "We all know that we're competing for the consumer's value, but we strongly believe that there's no better way to spend money for a family activity. The more we educate consumers, the better an experience they'll have on the water and the longer they'll continue to enjoy it."

GBM will have one of its staff members, Brett Little, presenting a seminar on "Boating for Women, Too," which will be offered on Jan. 15 at 3 pm. Carney says that women have become the fastest growing segment of the population when it comes to new boaters, and that at her business, she has seen a "dramatic increase" in the

number of women who are not only enjoying time on the water, but are becoming boat owners, as well.

Little's seminar will serve as a primer on basic considerations women boaters may want to keep in mind to become more skilled at boating. He will also co-present High Tech Walleye Techniques with Captain Mark Martin of Matteson Marine North on Jan. 17 at 3 & 6 p.m.

Dan McQuade of the Grand Traverse Area Sport Fishing Association (GTASFA) will be delivering presentations on

Trolling Techniques for Great Lakes salmon and trout on Jan. 16 at 3 p.m., and High Tech Walleye Techniques on Jan. 17 at 12:30 p.m. McQuade says that his seminars will focus on useful information for both accomplished and beginner fishing enthusiasts.

"The information on trolling techniques for big lake fish like salmon and trout will be a bit more advanced, but we also have sessions on downrigger and deep sea diving techniques that any trolling fisherman in Lake Michigan or the Bay could benefit from," said

McQuade.

"One of the most important things our organization does is to support all sorts of efforts to get people, especially kids, interested in fishing. We were signers on the agreement with the Grand Traverse Band for the new fishing agreement in 2000, we started the trout pound for National Cherry Festival and do one at the spring outdoor show at Civic Center, among other civic projects. Being able to be a part of the annual boat show and sale at the Grand Traverse Resort is key to our educational out-

reach. We're very much looking forward to being there."

The other scheduled presentations are Boaters Laws & Certification by John Waddell of the Traverse City Coast Guard on Jan. 15 at 3 pm; Global Positioning Systems by Captain Dale Barker on Jan. 15 at 6:30 p.m. and Jan. 17 at 7:30 p.m.; High Tech Walleye Techniques with Captain Mark Martin on Jan. 16 at 4:30 p.m. and with John Waddell on Jan. 16 at 6 p.m.; and High Tech Walleye Techniques with Captain Mark Martin on Jan. 17 at 3 and 6 p.m.



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