

Clinch Marina ties up loose ends for season

BY MELANIE BOLTHOUSE
Summer Guide editor

With the last of the renovations completed and a new reservations system, Clinch Marina Harbor Master Barry Smith expects this summer to be even busier than last.

"Last year, there were people that weren't aware of the new marina and the word got out," he said. Last August, Clinch

Marina celebrated its grand reopening after undergoing a \$10.3 million renovation that began in June 2002. The facelift was a first in more than 40 years and included a new floating dock system, new fueling options, a new harbor master building and a new breakwall.

"The breakwall was added so that we could utilize the Open Space area and block

the weather coming into the marina," Smith said. "We added a floating dock system along the new breakwall also to accommodate boats."

Owned by the City of Traverse City, the marina has 119 slips, with 64 reserved for seasonal boaters and 55 for transient boaters who travel from marina to marina.

The two breakwalls also provide tie-up spots for approximately 40 boats, depending on the length of watercraft moored there.

"We've had as large as a 130-foot yacht in here last year, and that's the advantage to this expansion," Smith said. "We can accommodate those boats, where in the past we never would have been able to."

With the majority of renovations completed before May 20, 2003, the marina only had a new launch ramp to finish before this season began.

Clinch also added a new reservations system, which will operate through the state's central reservation service.

The system guarantees boaters a spot when travel-



Doug Tessner/Record-Eagle

The revamped Clinch Marina has 119 slips for seasonal and transient boaters. Up to 40 boats can tie up on the two breakwalls, including boats more than 100 feet long.

ing around the Great Lakes.

"In the past it was first come, first serve, and it was really difficult," Smith said. "Some people may have avoided the marina because they didn't want to get here and find there were no slip spaces available. (The reservations system) is going to be a convenience to the boaters."

Seasonal boater Mike Comia has been docking at

Clinch for eight years and enjoys the convenience of the marina's improvements.

"The new renovations are nice because of the new facilities," he said. "It's made the marina more user-friendly for boaters — just a little bit more open space, a lot more protection from the wind and water. When the winds kicked up out of the north, you used to know it."



Record-Eagle/John L. Russell

Last year's \$10.3 million renovation included a second breakwall that allows bigger boats to be docked in the marina. It also offers more weather protection.

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