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## WINTER NEWS LETTER 2010

The cold has been here long enough, the lakes are frozen, the shrimp and smelts are running and the winter sports are here. We go up to my wife's old family camp with our snow machines to enjoy the woods and the white. It is best to enjoy the full four seasons here and I would rather have frozen ground than mud. So it should be a good season for our winter sports, which believe it or not, helps our northern economy quite well!

As we enter into our second decade of this century I am fortunate to say that this is my 34<sup>th</sup> year here. Most of you around the yard did not see me much of me this year. I had a battle in my neck caused by radiation, which ruined my lower jaw. I finally ended up with some surgery on the East Side of the Charles River (Boston) to have it fixed. I had a rotten spring, summer and fall but I am back to taking nourishment and am amongst the living! I guess God wants me to live a bit longer and so I plan to stick around and harass you a bit more.

I want to start off by thanking you all for your cards, notes and concerns. There are some people that I really need to thank. First is my wife Nancy, for going the extra mile with me. I am lucky to have such a great partner and it does not hurt that she is also a great nurse! My Mom, brothers and sister were all there, along with a great Crew here that kept the Marina rolling. I am a miracle of modern science, and blessed to be surrounded by such great people, who have humbled me and helped me to appreciate all that I have.

My dad passed away this spring after turning 90. He had a good run and we should all live so long. We celebrated his life this past summer at the family compound in Friendship with a tent, band, spirits, family and his friends. He gave me a start here and had great patience with me while I was growing up. I pray I will have that foresight with my son Gordon who is now 16, taking Drivers Ed, and is coming into his own! Patience!

Now that I have gotten that said, lets get down to business. Our new storage building went up last fall, it is full and we have a great facility at our 131 annex. I am running the Marina lean and mean for the winter, but we must stay open for all the commercial fisherman still out on the water. Although our sales in boats were off, we lowered our expenses and have kept our eye on the ball. I feel strong going forward with our Parker Boats, Carolina skiffs, and DuraNautic aluminum, all of which are sensible boats.

As I stated last year, the Yamaha two stroke is going away and we do have a few small ones left so do not be caught short. Yamaha has come out with a new F4 and 6 HP. They also have a new Four Stroke 70, which was needed and is light. Their big push was a whole new line up of a F225, F250 and F300, which are also lighter than the previous models. These will not be out until early summer, but they are exciting. I have been very happy with the F250 and thank God they are still keeping that. We are working on a new website and there will be a new section there on Classic Boat Restorations. We are doing two Bertrams, a Sisu and a Boston Whaler. Many of you love your old Whaler, Bertram or other well-made fiberglass boats. We have repowered & restored a lot of them and enjoy doing this type of work.





It is with regret that I inform you that Elwin and Dennis have retired. Elwin was the old guy that you saw in the shop when you walked by. His full name is Elwin Lord, and so we called him 'The Lord.' He had been with me for 20 years as a top line mechanic, mentor, teacher and friend. On the day he left, we realized that we had never really had an argument in all of our 20 years together. My eyes started to water when they loaded his toolbox into his truck. We will miss his humor and we have been blessed by his presence. He will be sadly missed by all that worked with him. His legacy will live on. Dennis has been with me almost as long. A trusted man who kept his word and was as honest as the day is long. He knew boats and motors very well and enjoyed making and closing a deal. He loved selling Parkers and Yamaha outboards. He was First Class all the way through and had a gift that will be hard to replace. We all know how much you miss a person when they are gone so I salute you Dennis and Elwin: THANKS!!

Niki is back after a sabbatical and Darrin & I are pleased to have her with us again. She is in the Glass and Refinishing shop and doing a great job. She also pressure washed most of the boats this fall and is responsible having your boat cleaned before you pick it up. Toby is now Lead Mechanic & Steve and Josh have enough years behind them now to be very valuable. I still run around and tell them *how* to do it and Darrin has been real cool telling them *when* to do it. Darrin is the person most of you communicate with and he is a cool dude with a lot of experience in this business.

The Ethanol hit us hard this year. Many of you had some serious problems and others did not. Ethanol dissolves the residue in old tanks and it goes right through the filters we put on. It has clogged injectors in HPDI's and Four Strokes. It kept us busier than usual, was a mess and very hard on island people where the fuel was already bad to begin with. The good news is that once it has been purged from your tank you should see fewer problems. The separation is another problem. Yamaha now wants us to leave our inboard tanks 7/8<sup>th</sup> full when in storage. Last year no one had a real answer but now with the new stabilizers and research, they think they have the answer? So we put some away with full tanks and others dry and we will be monitoring this come spring. Please write your politicians and remind them that this new E-15 (15%) ethanol they are trying to push through is not the answer to a greener world. I am trying to behave myself, as most of this ethanol issue is politics, underwriting of the corn growers, lobbyists and people I do not trust. I hope that any Wall Street bankers that received a large bonus this year, (which we paid for) will make sure to invest it in a boat and back into the economy!

On a brighter note, we are planning a Summer Solstice party on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June. I thought it might be fun to kick off the boating season with some fun, maybe some oysters, heavy hor d'oeuvres and beverages. We will do it right here at the yard, as I certainly have a lot to be thankful for. So mark it on your calendars and we will try to send out invitations for customers who are around. I am going to try and make this a regular event.

Each year we try and take the Thomaston 7<sup>th</sup> grade class to TGS up river, give them a history lesson, sight some eagles, and give them an experience most of them will not forget. The smiles I got this year were priceless and it is surprising how many local kids had never been up river or even in a boat. It took two boats and three days to get them all out but was well worth the effort. Maybe I am getting soft but it sure feels good to give back to your community when you can. So please remember to support Atlantic Challenge in Rockland. I am on the board and we do a lot of Pro Bono work for them. Their sailing program, CSP, and the Apprentice shop is a great asset for this area.

For some of you this is your first newsletter; you bought your first boat and/or motor from us and are now considered part of the family. Thank you! For others who have been with us for a long time, I thank you from the very bottom of my heart. Your health, family and friends are all you have that counts. So after that we go boating and enjoy this great coast with them! A Happy New Decade to all, and I look forward to seeing you back very soon!

Jeff

