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# Southern California Chapter

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*March,  
2005*

*Volume 7  
Issue 2*

# The Voice

Of the Southern California Chapter  
By Lee Kinnel, President

## LEE'S MARINE SERVICE

(Feb. 12, 05)

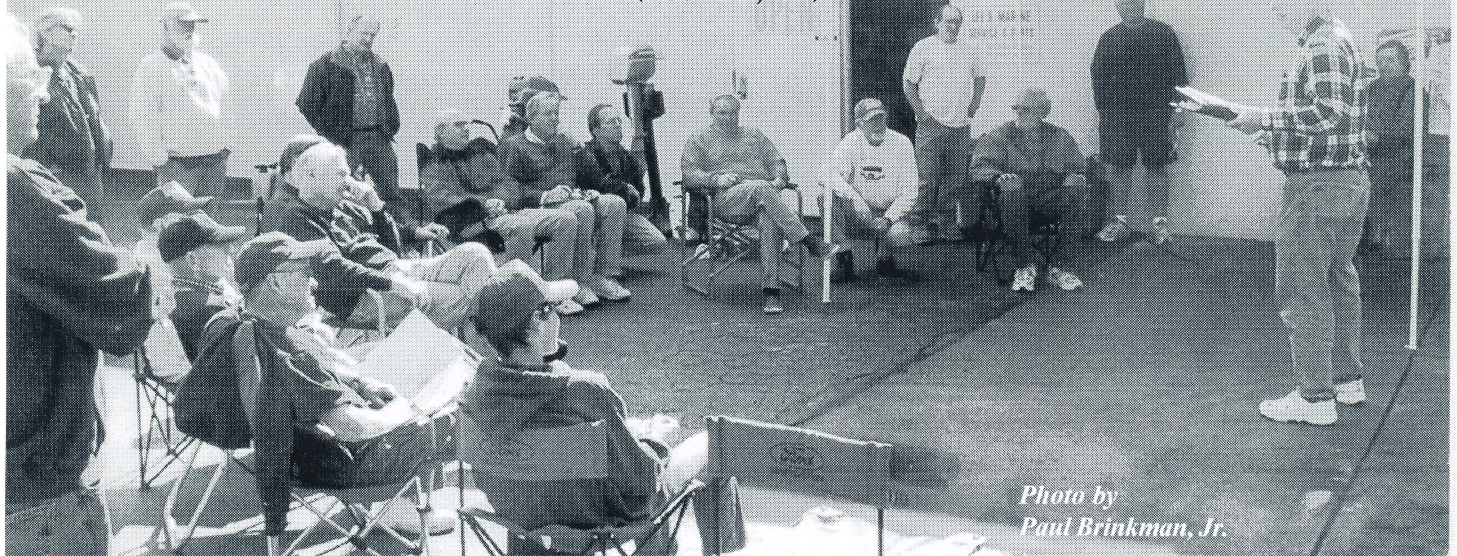


Photo by  
Paul Brinkman, Jr.

**D**id you enjoy the top cover picture? **Greg MacDonald laughingly** entitles it "David Vaughan and Chapter Members preparing to net a trout in the stream." What a hoot! Can you name all eight men pictured? Equally as enjoyable is the cover picture of **Les Gunnarson and Al Jarvis with Les's 1936 Johnson K 80**. We are rich in friendships in the Southern California Chapter and I am grateful to have the privilege of knowing each and every one of you.

**At our March 26th meet, in Lake Castaic, we will nominate candidates for a new Chapter President, and four Board Members.** Ballots will be included in the May Newsletter. Please vote, and mail your ballot back to me at 37230 Wildwood View Drive, Yucaipa, CA 92399. **Or better yet, bring your marked ballot to the June meet.** In June all votes will be counted and we will have chosen a new President.

Hopefully, our Vice Presidents will choose to run again from the North, South, East and West. **They have done wonderful jobs** supporting and serving their areas, and assisting me

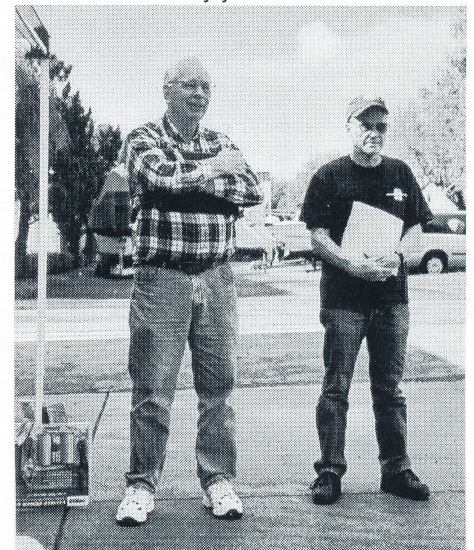
as President. They are; **Gerry Coats, Dennis Byrne, Craig Butcher, Steve Hurley, and George Kent.** These men work very hard for all of us. We have all had a great time together and will continue to do so. I sincerely thank these men, and each and every one of you for your dedication, Chapter spirit and support during the past seven years.

**Please consider running for President/Board Member - for one year at a time.** If you cannot attend our Lake Castaic Meet, make your intentions known quickly so that we may nominate you in proxy. As president, during the one year, you will arrange for only 6 meets, notifying all members of these times. As president you will be our liaison between members of other nautical organizations and *regulate the spending of our Chapter funds.*

This is not President of the United States, it is simply President of our Antique Outboard Motor Club - for one year at a time. **Please step up and take a turn - we need your help to keep this fine Chapter running smoothly.**

I have had a great time, as your President. After seven years, I am sure you will agree, we need some new ideas. Change is exciting!

We might even get back in Puddingstone. (This is one of our very favorite, centrally located, places to meet, and they have treated us quite badly in the past.) I understand they have **new lifeguards** now, and with any luck, employees are new right up to the top! Good things are in store for our Chapter, I am sure. Please continue to support our new leadership, so we'll all have fun for many years to come.



*"Those of you who do not pay your dues will be getting a call from my "Enforcer" on my left." (Greg MacDonald you have a vivid imagination writing our captions - you make us laugh, and you are indispensable)!*

# MAP TO SO. CAL'S NEXT WET MEET SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 2005 LAKE CASTAIC

*Just Show Up With Your Family, Boat, Motors, R.V., and Plan to Relax:*

**L**ake Castaic directions: For those coming from the North: Travel South on Interstate 5, over the grapevine and exit left (going East) on Lake Hughes Road. Go through the signal light to the first stop sign which is at Ridge Route Road, turn left and go up to the main entrance to Castaic Park. The meet will be held at the West Launch Ramp location and you can get directions at the gate. Camping will be next to the water, at the grass, next to the West launch ramp.

## BRING FAMILY & FRIENDS...

**Coming from the East?** Follow Interstate 10 or the 60 West to the 57 Freeway North and the 57 will merge with the 210 Freeway. Continue on the 210 until it merges with Interstate 5 and continue on Interstate 5 past Magic Mountain to the Lake Hughes Offramp. Exit right (going East) on Lake Hughes Road. Go through the signal light to the first stop sign which is at Ridge Route Road, turn left and go up to the main entrance to Castaic Park. The meet will be held at the West Launch Ramp location and you can get directions at the gate. Camping will be next to the water, at the grass, near the West launch ramp.

## LET'S PARTY...

**For those coming from San Diego and Orange County:** Go straight up Interstate 5 past Magic Mountain to the Lake Hughes offramp, Exit right (going East) on Lake Hughes Road. Go through the signal light to the first stop sign which is at Ridge Route Road, turn left and go up to the main entrance to Castaic Park. The meet will be held at the West Launch Ramp location and you can get directions at the gate. Camping will be next to the water, at the grass, near the West launch ramp.



**FREE CAMPING  
2 NIGHTS -  
MARCH 25 & 26**

**PLEASE BRING  
OUTBOARDS, AND  
PARTS TO SHOW/  
SELL OR TRADE**

The lake will be available for boating and fishing too! The West Launch Site reserved especially for us has a number of beautiful ramps and docks.



OVER →

# MAP TO NO. CAL'S NEXT WET MEET SATURDAY, APRIL 29 & 30, 2005 JACK'S BAYOU RESORT

This wet meet will be held on the Kings River, five miles East of the City of Mendota. It will be held at Jack's Bayou Resort, 30440 Whitesbridge Road, which is Highway 180. The Northern group loves to be on the water.

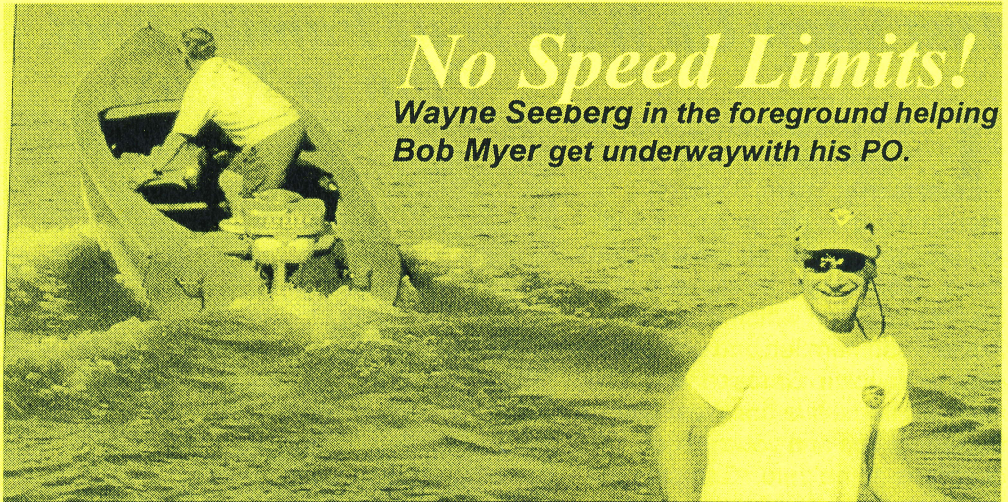
Jack's has 9 camp sites, if available, for fee, or free dry camping is available across the street at the Mendota Waterfowl Management area, or a motel is available 8 miles North in Firebaugh.

Bring your boats and motors! This is a wet meet with lots of water to play on! I will bring my aluminum boat for those who want to run their motors and don't have a boat. We have a place reserved at Jack's with a beach to launch. There is a day use fee and a fee to launch.

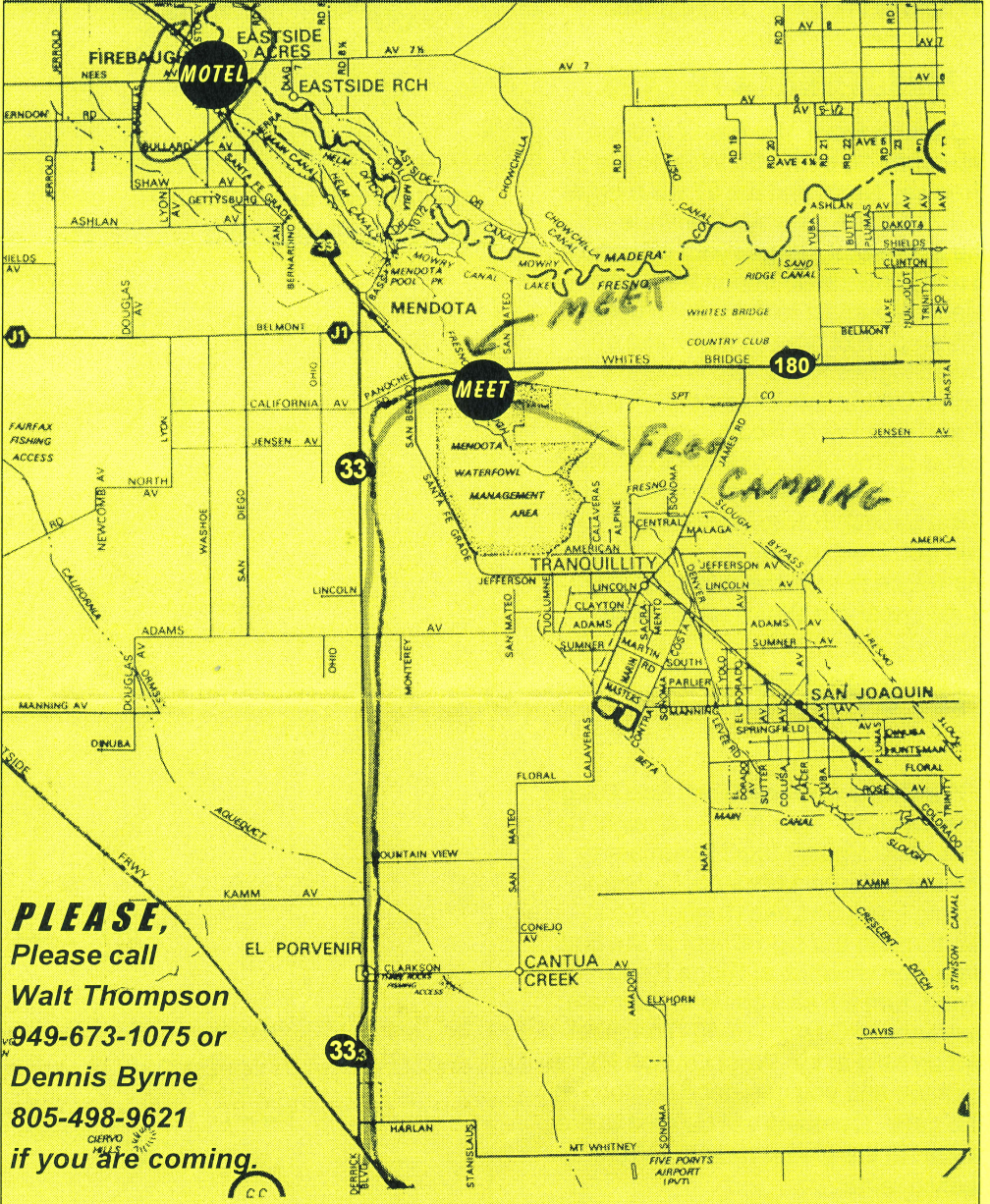
The meet is approximately 240 miles from Newport and 320 miles from San Diego. To reach the meet location, drive North on Highway 5 to Highway 33. Highway 33 and Mendota are due West of Fresno. Drive North on Highway 33, which will be a right turn off of Highway 5, twenty miles to Panoche Road and turn right (East). Panoche Road becomes Whitesbridge Road or Highway 180. Drive East 3 to 4 miles to the location. On the North side of the highway is Jack's, on the South the Waterfowl area.

The motel is a Best Western and is located off the WEST Panoche Road exit in Firebaugh. Firebaugh is located 5+ miles North of the East Panoche Road turnoff where you go to the meet. There are 74 units and finding a room should not be a problem. However, I would suggest that a reservation be made as this is the only motel I was able to find in the AAA book for some distance. This motel is located in the 2005 AAA Southern California book on page 424. The phone number is 559-659-1444.

**THIS EVENT WILL BE WELL WORTH THE TRIP - SEE YOU THERE!**



*No Speed Limits!*  
Wayne Seeberg in the foreground helping Bob Myer get underway with his PO.



**PLEASE,  
Please call  
Walt Thompson  
949-673-1075 or  
Dennis Byrne  
805-498-9621  
if you are coming.**

# NEXT MEET - LAKE CASTAIC - MARCH 26TH

## YES, THAT'S RIGHT, MARCH 26TH!

Our normal April meet was bumped up due to bass tournaments during the entire month of April at Lake Castaic. Therefore, we offer **FREE CAMPING** the nights of **March 25th & 26th**. *Bring friends and family - boats, and antique motors. Kids and grandchildren should be out of school this week, so let's try to spend quality time together. This is an opportunity for a great get-away for the entire family.*

Our newest members, **George and Cindy Grew** have expressed interest in camping with us. We hope **Mike and Jacquie McTaggart** make it this time too. Looks like we'll have a full moon to camp under - what could be nicer? If you arrive late in the evening (or need directions) simply **call Lee at 714-801-3284**, and we will unlock the front gate. Questions? Call the following:

**EMPEROR OF NORTHERN CA:**  
**DENNIS BYRNE**  
Cell: 951-453-9920

**SOUTH, SAN DIEGO COUNTY:**  
**GERRY COATS**  
858-272-3642

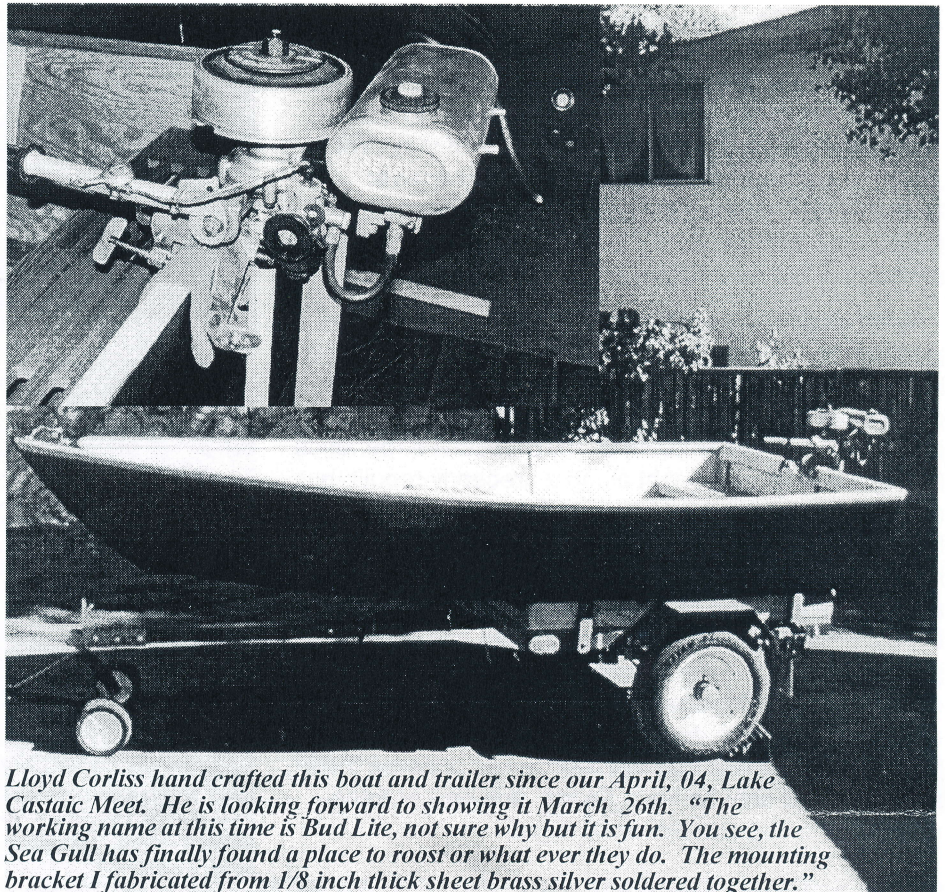
**WEST, ORANGE COUNTY:**  
**GEORGE KENT**  
949-589-0678

**EAST, SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY:**  
**CRAIG BUTCHER,**  
909-769-0175

**\*We need a member to bring a barrel in which to run our motors.** Lee's Marine spoiled us with their tank. If you can help with a barrel, please call Lee. 909-790-8168.

**Jack Holtwick** was happy to win his first raffle at the last meet! **Darryl Webber** does a great job picking out our raffle prizes.

**Manya Coats** is busy getting well and hopefully in time to attend this meet. She fell February 14th severely injuring her back. Can't keep her down . . . look for a bright red Corvette, with a propeller, zooming by as you drive to the meet. It could belong to our **Members Gerry and Manya Coats**. They may be happy to oblige if you care to race. Here is what Gerry has to say



*Lloyd Corliss hand crafted this boat and trailer since our April, 04, Lake Castaic Meet. He is looking forward to showing it March 26th. "The working name at this time is Bud Lite, not sure why but it is fun. You see, the Sea Gull has finally found a place to roost or what ever they do. The mounting bracket I fabricated from 1/8 inch thick sheet brass silver soldered together."*

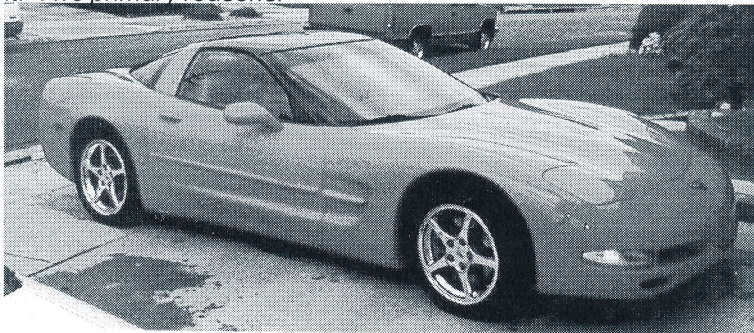
about their new acquisition:

"I'm sure each of us has a favorite color, mine has always been red. That doesn't very well explain my preference for green Mercury's. But, that's another story. My red cars have included a 57 Red Roadmaster convertible, 57 Chevy station wagon, a red 71 El Camino, a red 94 Chevy truck and now this - a bright red 2000 Corvette. For years I've wanted one but there was always some reason not to indulge this fantasy. But, logic was never my strong suit so we did it! *Two primary reasons:*

1. If I get much older I may not be able to handle it and,
2. I may not be able to corkscrew into one.

How's that for logic! Now I have to find a place to mount the propeller."

*We hope to see each and every one of you at this meet. Walt Thompson picked up a nice Merc Mark 20 last meet, as did Mike Nadeau. Good Motors are out there and they become available when you least expect to buy one. Don't stay home and "snooze, you may lose."*



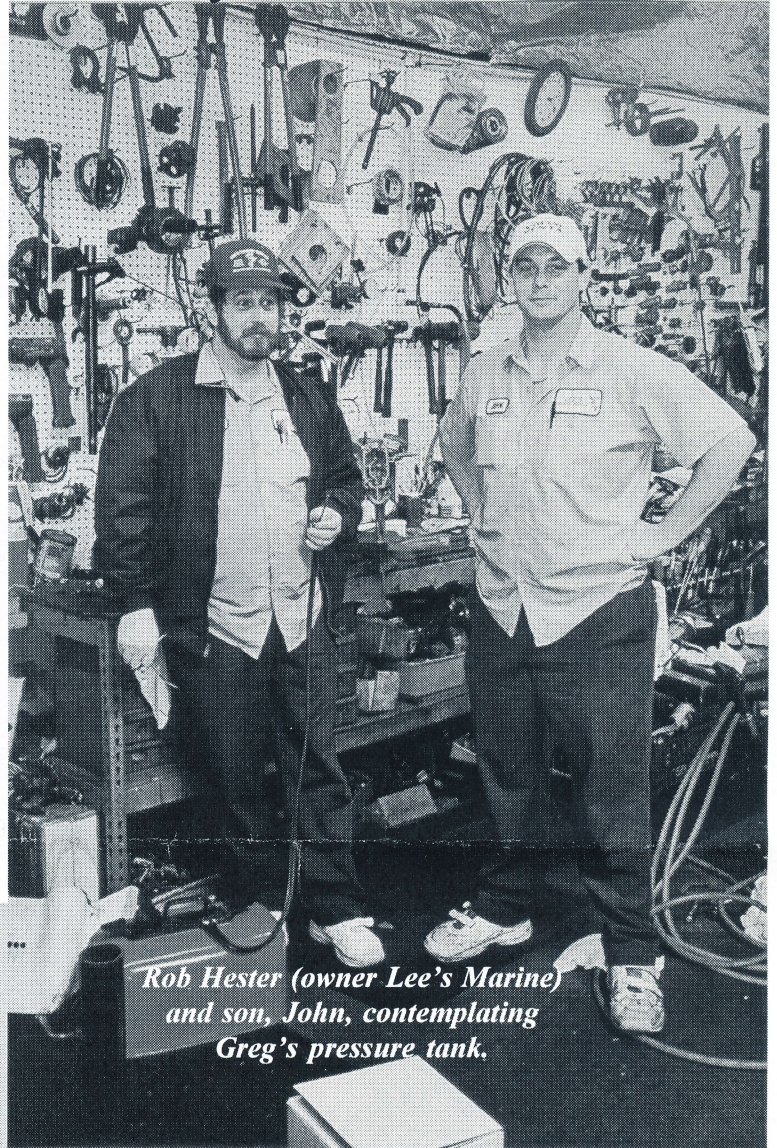
The new, bright red, super fast "Coatsmobile" Corvette - ready to race you to our meet March 26th.

# Thank You for Attending the "Almost Dry" Meet at Lee's Marine, February 12, 2005

By Greg MacDonald  
Writer and Photographer

Life is always full of surprises! The February 12th meet didn't hold a lot of promise due to a land-locked location and 90% chance of rain. Yet it turned out to be a very successful event thanks to Mother Nature sparing the precipitation, a good turnout (30 members and guests,) and some superb hospitality on the part of **Lee's Marine**.

As far as a "hand's on" event I can't imagine a better location with a large tank for running engines, one of the best stocks of obsolete parts for old outboards, and two of the most knowledgeable outboard motor mechanics on hand. I was really taken by my particular experience during the meet. I brought along a recently rebuilt (but not run) 1957 Johnson 10 hp which I intend to use as the main motor for the "Baby Flyer." **Darryl Webber** immediately volunteered to get the motor running, adjusted, and dialed-in. This worked out beautifully but the old pressure tank had multiple leaks and other problems. Imagine my fortune though as **Rob Hester** owner of **Lee's Marine**, stopped what he was doing and spent the entire duration of our meet rebuilding the tank using expertise that few mechanics possess today, and parts that only he has. To me, this kind of assistance is what our Chapter is all about.



*Rob Hester (owner Lee's Marine) and son, John, contemplating Greg's pressure tank.*



*Garry Lawson and Steve Hurley*

Usually we have some non-outboard attractions at our meets and this time **Richard Plavetich** brought a sensational scale model of a 1940's Chris Craft barrel-back runabout that he has been working on - on and off - for the past four years. What took so long is that the boat has been built just like the full-sized original with mahogany planking and ribs! We were hoping to see President Lee's "new" 1957 Chevy Bel Air hardtop but that will have to wait until a sunny meet. The rain didn't stop **Gerry and Manya Coats** from zooming to the meet in their new gorgeous, bright red Corvette. What a prize and treat for us all to see.

The pizza lunch was great, thanks to **Manya Coats and Lesa Thomas** for setting up and helping make the delicious antipasta salad.

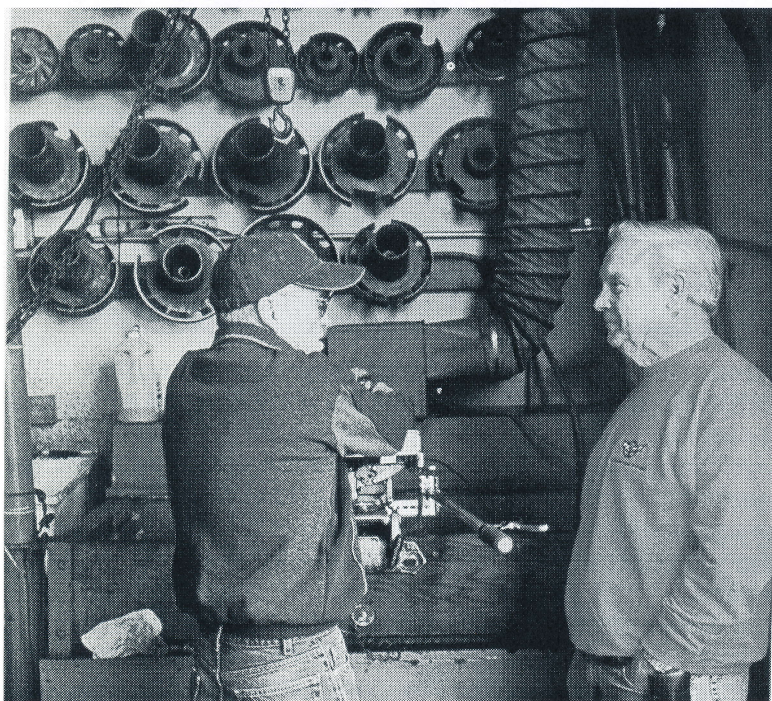
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# Surprise Attendance, & Good Weather Feb. 12th . . . Lots of Motors, Friends, Fun, Food and Relaxation

Continued  
from Page 4



*Ilona Hook, Manya Coats, and  
Richard Plavetich with "Miss Chris"*



*Walt Thompson explaining to Gerry Coats how to start a 1952,  
55, 59, 62 Mercury, put together like Johnny Cash's Cadillac -  
one piece at a time.*

*By Craig MacDonald*

To me the most unusual outboard of the meet was **Jeff Slobodian's** recently acquired and restored "Anzani". When I was a kid, my father subscribed to Rudder Magazine and I was always looking at the outboard motor ads in the back. One motor fascinated me because it looked so unusual and curious with the upturned elfish tank that upturned at the back. Although I saw plenty of ads I never saw one of the motors - and never have in my life until Jeff was putting his on the stand. Turns out that the "Anzani Minor" was a British motor of 3/4 hp that was sold in the British Isles, Australia, and Canada, but obviously not in the United States . . . at least not in any great numbers. Jeff purchased his on E-Bay from Canada. (Pictured below) It looks as if it should be in someone's silver cabinet rather than on the back of a dinghy!



# The Doctor Is In

An expert outboard mechanic's longtime repair practice and his private collection of vintage motors combine to demonstrate breakthrough technical developments . . .

*Submitted by David Marotta*

*Story by Ken Textor,  
Professional Boatbuilder Magazine*

With no fewer than 45 years as an outboard-engine mechanic, **Lincoln Davis** has learned that even the oldest outboards can tell you a lot. Take for instance, Davis' considered forensic opinion of the Johnson 50hp (37-kW) Sea Horse of 1958, a year that marks the approximate midpoint of the modern outboard's technical evolution.

"I can't believe they made and sold an outboard engine that bad," he says. Davis, a youthful 58, owns and operates an outboard and I/O dealership in the coastal town of Waldoboro, Maine. The shop specializes in Mercury Marine products, but in the course of his career, Davis has worked on all the major brands, as well as a number of obscure, long extinct machines. "When I started in this business, I was amazed at what I found. That 50 horse Johnson, for example, was praised as a "break-through" engine because it was the first widely distributed V-4 outboard. But, it had a horrible fault. And yet they sold thousands of them."

Like a coroner explaining a messy death to a jury, Davis points out that in the 1950's petroleum-related pollution laws were few and far between. It was therefore common for outboard manufacturers to be a bit blasé about the design of fuel delivery systems. In fact, he says, most outboards were expected to "dump" a certain amount of the two-cycle engine's gasoline-oil mixture overboard during the process of delivering fuel to the piston cylinder. Ordinarily, between 5% and 15% of the fuel might be dumped, creating that characteristic sheen we all remember from the bad old days of outboard motors.



In addition to the obvious pollution problems that fuel dumping created, fuel efficiency was also seriously compromised, which was a much bigger issue to outboard customers of the 1950s than you might expect. Gasoline may have been comparatively cheap then - at around 15 cents a gallon - but owners of small boats still did not want to have to carry around numerous, or large, fuel tanks in their little outboard boats. So fuel efficiency was a sensitive sales point. Nevertheless, the

oversized Sea Horse, affectionately known as the "Fat Fifty," was a notorious fuel hog. During the 30 years he's had his own outboard dealership, Stetson & Pinkham, Inc., Davis acquired several Fat Fifties and put them aside. Eventually, he became curious about the fuel consumption stories he'd heard. "People would tell me these things burned 18 gallons in an hour," Davis recalls. "And when I started testing them in a tank here, I could see for myself that those reports weren't far off."

*Continued on Page 7*



## *The Doctor Is In . . .* *Continued from Page 6*

Indeed, Davis found the Fat Fifty was dumping up to 75% of its fuel - less at top rpm and the maximum amount at low rpm. In conducting a careful analysis of the Fat Fifty, he discovered that the engine's basic design was at fault: the distance between the carburetor and the piston was too far and indirect. That configuration allowed the atomized fuel-air mixture plenty of opportunity to condense the fuel out of the blend, making efficient fuel delivery and combustion all but impossible. Thus, most of the fuel got dumped before it could be used, resulting in terrible fuel efficiency, even though the engine operated reliably and with plenty of power.

"I've been around long enough to know that every time there's a design innovation, you've got to watch it carefully to see how it really performs," says Davis. A self-described motorhead since his preteen years, Davis did a stint in the U.S. Army (with a tour in Vietnam) followed by four years of college (with a degree in business administration) before passionately pursuing a career in what he's always liked best: repairing and reconditioning outboard motors, and, in particular, performing what he calls "autopsies" of failed engines. "The outboard industry is where a lot of engine innovation comes from," he contends. "Often, the automobile industry just adopts technology we've already worked on and used for years."

It came as no surprise, therefore, that despite the serious design flaw of the Fat Fifty, its clever V-4 block became very popular and remains in use throughout today's field of outboards - albeit in a much more fuel-efficient version. About a decade after the Fat Fifty's introduction, the United States government banned all fuel dumping outboards. Moreover, the Feds continue to demand increasingly fuel-efficient outboards, having imposed standards now that even the automobile industry doesn't have to contend with, according to Davis. Outboard customers, too, demand not only better fuel efficiency but also

quieter operation and less maintenance. Unlike most outboard dealerships, Stetson & Pinkham's customer base includes a substantial percentage of commercial fishermen. That portion of Davis' trade depends on outboards for its livelihood and often asks Davis and his crew to sell and service S&P rebuilt motors for extra tough duty. His commercial customers therefore provide Davis with the true measure of a given outboard's durability. Recreational boat owners constitute the bulk of Stetson & Pinkham's business (besides outboard sales and service, the company sells fiberglass and aluminum production boats and operates an extensive storage-and-maintenance business), and for them, any outboard is of course a purely discretionary purchase. Unlike, say, an automobile, an outboard is not a product necessary to survival. The recreational customer can take it or leave it, depending on how well it performs. This fairly elementary dynamic, insists Davis, explains why outboard manufacturers have had to lead, and will continue to lead, the way in fuel efficient lightweight engine technologies - innovations that the automobile industry will eventually adapt to over-the-road engines and vehicles. The question is: exactly what innovations are good ideas, and which ones are like the Fat Fifty?

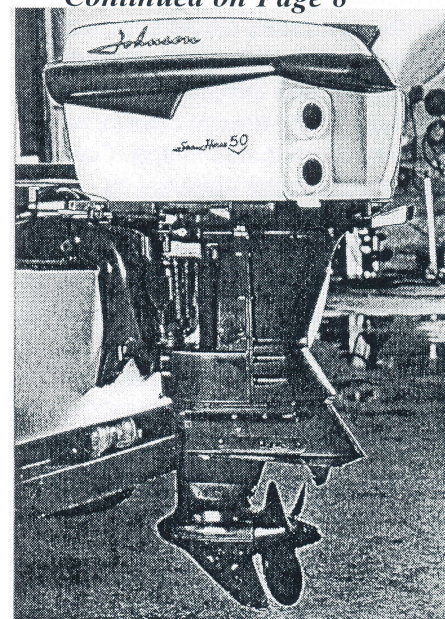
For Davis, the design innovations hitting the outboard market today are intriguing. He cites, for example, engines fitted with ceramic pistons that need almost no oil - either in the fuel or a sump - for their operation. Another development of interest is lightweight castings employing a relatively new "lost foam" method that enables the manufacturer to turn out parts more quickly and with consistently higher quality - even though this advanced lost-foam process is basically a throwback to sand-casting circa early 1900s. And then there's the persistent debate about the efficiency of the four stroke engine versus its two stroke counterpart (Davis: "As far as I'm concerned, the jury's still out on the staying power of four-strokes"), or plain

old carburetion systems versus computerized fuel injection, or metal parts versus plastic, and so on. Some of the ideas sound revolutionary; Davis argues that "revolutionary" can be either a big positive or a big negative for buyers and sellers of outboards.

"Some engineering innovations in outboard technology have been brilliant," Davis says. Standing amid more than 40 outboards of various eras, displayed museum-like at his dealership on State Route 32, Davis clearly gets excited talking about the details of significant evolutionary steps along the way.

"Look at this Elto," he says, pointing to a 3-hp (2.2-kW) 1926 motor that was part of the Evinrude product line, though marketed under the non discontinued name. "This is when they finally went to aluminum, something we take for granted today. But just look at that casting." The Eltos' shaft housing is a solid casting with a passageway molded right into the shaft body. The passageway was for forcing the exhaust to exit underwater. "I don't know how they made that casting with primitive casting technology they had then. But they did it, and did a good job, too."

His outboard collection also includes a 2 hp. (1.5-kW) 1915 Wisconsin, made by Wisconsin Machinery  
*Continued on Page 8*



*Johnson Sea Horse "Fat fifty"*

## The Doctor Is In, Continued from page 7

& Manufacturing Company. A state-of-the-art piece of equipment in its day, this motor, above the water, was lightweight steel; below, it was mostly brass, with a solid brass lower unit that looks nearly indestructible. Inasmuch as the engine turns only 600 rpm, max, it probably was indestructible. Until the late 1920s, virtually all popular outboards were designed for nonplaning hulls, meaning the boats generally attained speeds of perhaps 5 or 6 knots. But the quest for faster speeds changed all that, says Davis.

Outboard racing was really big in the 20s. That became the driving force behind most outboard innovations," says Davis, who notes that the marriage of planing hulls and higher rpm engines the latter part of that decade made it possible for ordinary people to go up to 30 miles per hour on the water, racers were approaching a mile a minute. "That was regarded as really fast back then," Davis notes.

The Great Depression and World War II brought outboard innovation nearly to a standstill, a situation that didn't change until the late 40s. Nineteen forty eight, to be exact. That's the year Mercury Marine came out with its four cylinder, in-line Thunderbolt 4. The motor was officially advertised as a 25 hp engine. But Mercury CEO Carl Kiekhaefer typically advertised his horsepower ratings lower than they actually were - primarily to keep customers well satisfied with the engine's performance for a given horsepower rating. Davis says that particular engine was probably closer to 40hp. Even today, horsepower ratings on certain outboards are suspect, he insists. "Not everyone rates them the same way," he says. "Some rate them in a way that gives them a higher rating than they actually deliver. So you still have to be cautious."

In any case, Mercury's Thunderbolt walked away with blue ribbon after blue ribbon at outboard races in 1948. "They won everything that year," says Davis, whose analysis of Thunderbolts

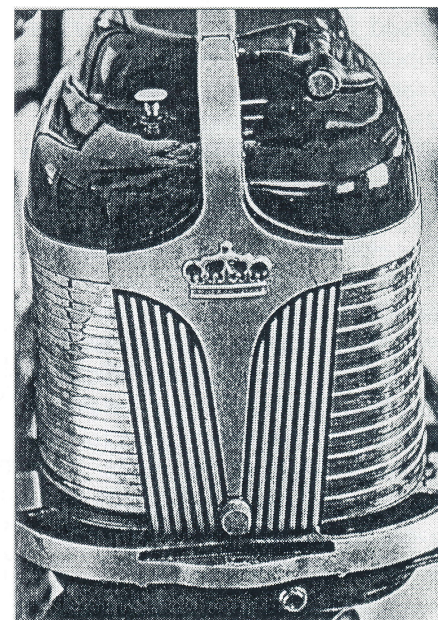
led him to attribute much of the engine's success to a significantly shortened distance from the carburetor to the piston cylinder, thereby keeping the air-fuel mixture properly atomized on its way to ignition in the cylinder. Thus, what was a carburetion success for the in-line 4 -cyl Thunderbolt in 1948 was a failure in the Fat Fifty's V-4 nearly a decade later. Evidently, says Davis, there were outboard manufacturers who didn't learn well from their competition.

The boating industry's obsession, in the last century, with speed and power left certain crucial technical developments in the dust. For example, outboards didn't have forward, neutral, and reverse gears until 1949. "Can you imagine?" Davis says with shock in his voice. "There you are, standing in the stern of the boat, leaning out over the engine, pulling the starter cord - and the thing starts up in gear. You're off balance anyway, and plunk, over you go. Hard to believe they made engines that way for as long as they did - without being sued into bankruptcy."

Going back to the very first outboards in the late 1890s, we see that design innovations that were a convenience to the consumer were generally slow in coming. It took more than 30 years for outboard designers to think of, and then perfect, the idea of a pull cord for starting the engine. Before that, a dangerous flywheel with a knob arrangement on top of the engine (also known as a "knuckle buster") was the starting mechanism on nearly all outboards. Even with the advent of the starter cord, it took another 10 years to develop a marketable, automatically recoiling cord. Until then, you had to wrap the cord manually around a grooved flywheel each time you pulled it.

Prior to the 1950s, it was the mechanical engineer or designer - the motorheads of the day - who were key to the industry's outboard innovations.

Top executives at the big-three outboard brands - Mercury, Johnson,



*In the mid-1950s, this Merc Mark 20 mounted on the transom of, say, a brightly painted 12' Penn Yan Swift - described by the builder as a "stock utility outboard racing runabout" - would have been that era's near perfect boat/motor combination for any speed-loving, lake going kid (or forever-young adult) lucky enough to own one.*

and Evinrude - were themselves mechanical engineers, which reinforced the corporate emphasis on engine power while subordinating just about everything else. But then the postwar "miracle" of aggressive marketing took hold throughout American industry, "That made for big changes," notes Davis.

The changes are readily evident in Davis' outboard collection. Until the 1950s, most outboards were rather utilitarian looking - drab, and simple to a fault. Davis' collection also displays examples of advertising from the pre-1950s era; most of it focuses on facts and figures conveying an engine's capability. Those ads contain little hype or exaggeration. From the 1950s onward, through, outboards start looking more and more slick, with all sorts of extraneous chrome and logos and fanciful doodads and colorful cowlings, even zoomy shaft housings.

*Continued on Page 10*

## OUTBOARD NEWS

By Jeff at Laing's outboards- E-Mail:Jeff15798@wzrd.com

As we enter the new year, it is interesting to note the different directions in which the domestic outboard manufacturers are moving. There are three names, and three different philosophies of how to meet the needs of boaters in the future. Here is a rundown of the three:

**MERCURY** will be taking the four stroke route entirely by developing new and sophisticated designs to gradually replace their two strokes. The Verado, which is a 6 cylinder in line four stroke with supercharging, after-cooling, and digital throttle and shift, will begin to replace the popular Optimax direct injected two strokes. The Verado is available in 200, 225, 250 and 275 hp for 2005. In 2006, the Verado line will include a 135, 150 and 175 hp four cylinder engine. In recent years, some of Mercury's larger V-block four strokes had components made by Yamaha. This will be ending as Mercury terminates a relationship with Yamaha that dates back at least 30 years. By 2008, all the Mercury two strokes will be gone.

**EVINRUDE** is staking their future on the continuation of two stroke technology. They are convinced that their new E-Tec technology will prove superior to four strokes. They have added a 3.3 liter V-6 E-Tec that puts out 200, 225 and 250 hp. The E-Tec spans the range of 60 to 250 hp, and will soon debut in the low hp segment of the market. They claim the E-Tecs are lighter, simpler, cleaner, and just as quiet as any four stroke.

**JOHNSON'S** future intentions are somewhat cloudier. Johnson's line-up of motors is divided between four strokes and old technology carbureted two strokes. The four strokes are all being manufactured by Suzuki. The 8 hp four stroke has been dropped, which was the last OMC designed four stroke in the line. Since all carbureted two strokes must be gone in a few years to satisfy the antipollution regulations, Johnson will not be left with much.

I think **EVINRUDE** will do well, because there will always be a demand for a two stroke outboard. Mercury will have a difficult time competing with the foreign motors, who have more experience in four strokes, but I think their reputation and name will carry them through. Johnson's future is a little less certain, unless they have some new technology in the works.



*Paul Brinkman, Jr., and Jack Holtwick. Jack was visiting Paul on a J.A.G. (T.V. series) site location in the town of Piru, February 15, 2005.*

## Meet Attendees

February 12, 2005

Lee's Marine, Cerritos CA

Gerry Coats

Manya Coats

Steve Hurley

David Vaughan

Les Gunnarson

Alan Jarvis

Richard Plavatich

Walt Thompson

Jeffrey Slobodan

Darryl Webber

Dennis Byrne

Jack Holtwick

Greg Mac Donald

Weston Hook

Lee Kinnel

Jackie Kinnel

Dave Williams

John Van Dyke

Garry Lawson

Matthew MacDonald

Kevin Thomas

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John DeLeonardi

Rob Hester

John Hester

Dom Clesi

## The Doctor Is In, Continued from page 8

At the same time, these engines were sold with increasingly breathless, hyperbolic ad copy. Mercury Marine frequently brought attention to itself with ad photography that featured goofy stunts - human pyramids, elephants on water skis, and improbable pulling contests, such as the one showing the ocean liner Queen Elizabeth with a towrope from its bow to the stern of a runabout powered by a 125 hp Merc outboard.

As misleading as those ads may have been, the marketing departments were nevertheless now contributing ideas for design innovations. That is, technical developments were prompted not by in-house motorheads but by marketing people.

Marketers polled and probed consumers to learn not only what the consumer wanted to hear and see in their outboards, but also what they wanted in the way of operation. Thus, the 1950s gave rise to such widespread innovations as electric starters, F-N-R shift mechanisms, and remote fuel tanks on every major brand of outboard. Such developments had been experimented with in previous eras, but were never perfected until the consumer-driven demands of the 50's took hold. "Those elements were primitive, but they worked," Davis says of the earliest innovations that evolved into the reliable mechanism we know today.

Other innovations, however, failed miserably. In his examinations of direct-injection two stroke outboards dating as far back as the early 1960s, Davis has discovered why successful fuel-efficient, direct injection motors have been so elusive until only recently. "They couldn't get the timing right," he says, noting that outboard Marine Corporation, the now-defunct parent company of Evinrude and Johnson motors, began developing a direct-inject outboard 40 years ago. It failed because the metering and timing of the fuel was driven by a highly complex, but woefully imprecise, mechanical device. So, most manu-

facturers gave up on direct-inject engines for the next 20 years or more. Even when microprocessors were added to outboards in the 1980s and 90s, getting precise timing and metering proved difficult until just a few years ago.

Davis' forensic outboard research continues today. With excellent storage facilities at his new business location, he now has room for literally scores of deceased outboards, most of which are Mercury engines. Vast rooms of outboards and assorted parts animate him as he talks about the most recent technologies at Mercury Marine, whose brand he's been devoted to for decades. "They vowed to go with four-stroke technology for the best in fuel efficiency and pollution control," says Davis. "But they had to backtrack and later admit that there was a future for direct-inject technologies in a two-stroke engine."

He claims Mercury makes some of the best outboards available. Not long ago, Davis proved his point by putting a used 115 hp, 4-cyl Merc through its paces during a 4,500 mile trip through the Canadian Maritimes, down the St. Lawrence River, through the Great Lakes, down various rivers to the Gulf of Mexico, around and across the Florida peninsula, up the Intracoastal Waterway, and finally back to base on the Maine coast. "You really have to have a reliable engine for a voyage like that." Davis says of his trip, made in a 23' 1983 Seaway skiff. Fitted with a shop-built half-tower, it's a boat Davis owned for 16 years: as a demo, as a motor test platform, and as a funky sportfisherman chasing giant bluefin tuna offshore in the Gulf of Maine. (The Seaway model is based

on a traditional wooden Casco Bay lobster skiff; Davis' dealership sold production fiberglass versions in large volume to commercial and recreational buyers alike.)

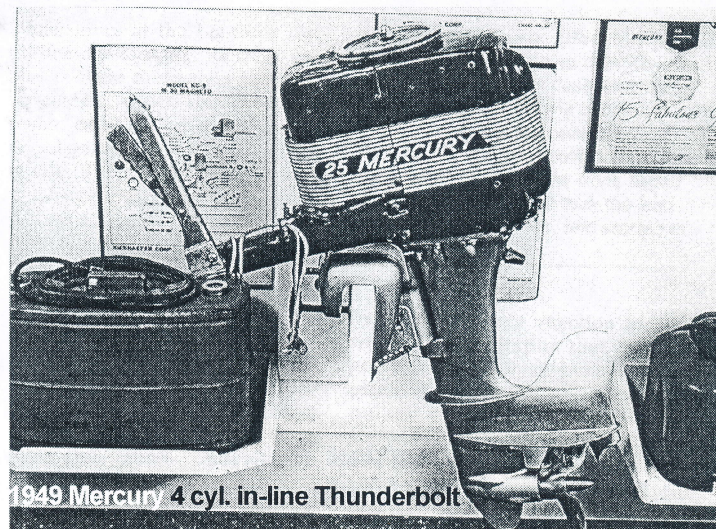
He says he chose the 1998 engine because he was impressed with both its fuel efficiency and durability.

"Mine never missed a beat throughout the entire trip," he notes. In fact, the engine survived a sinking and still motored on with only minor tweaking to compensate for its time underwater. Naturally, it helps that Davis is a Merc mechanic, and a gifted one at that, although he also repairs modern outboards made by other manufacturers.

Davis still enjoys tearing down and analyzing outboards old and new. He learns from design mistakes just as medical students learn from studying a cadaver in anatomy class. "I'd love to do just this," he says of his outboard autopsies. "But I also have to make a living."

Maybe so, but at Stetson & Pinkham, the outboard doctor is always in, ready to talk about and show the best - and worst - the industry has ever offered.

***About the Author:** Ken Textor builds and repairs boats and furniture, conducts charters, does deliveries, and regularly writes about these subjects for various marine and consumer publications. He is based in Arrowsic, Maine.*



1949 Mercury 4 cyl. in-line Thunderbolt

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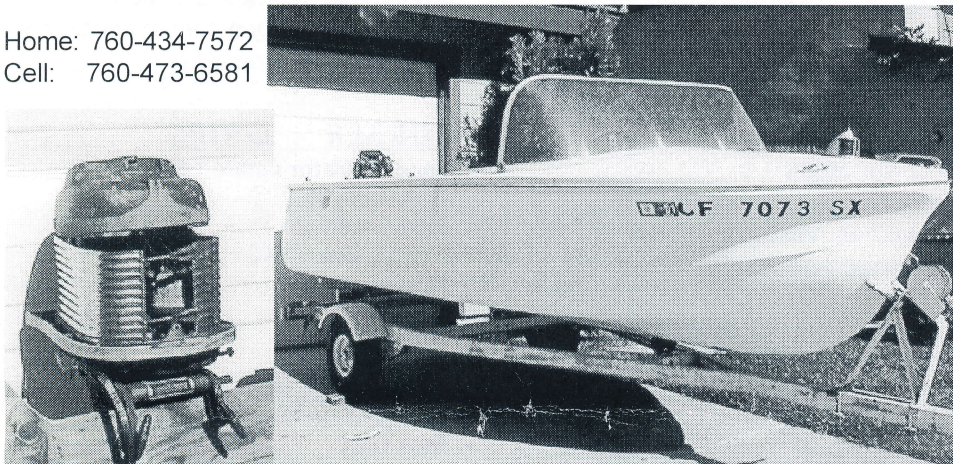
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