



# The Smoke Signal



Newsletter of the BLACKHAWK CHAPTER-ACBS

VOLUME 17 ISSUE

September/October 2011

## A Truly Grand and Glorious Event

It is rare in a lifetime that so many knowledgeable and capable people come together in a venue such as this to discuss and advance their common interests. For us, the joy is sharing what we have, our boats and our homes, with people who share our passion and can appreciate what they are seeing. So we're pleased that you are here.

The week started Monday evening with a reception and dinner at George Plamondon's elegant Michigan Avenue apartment, what a great place and great location. A wonderful evening, George, it couldn't have been nicer. Thank you very much.

Tuesday, the Chicago River tour. After we launched at Burnham Harbor, we went through the lock and entered the Chicago River. What a sight it was with the Tribune building behind us, the iconic Wrigley building on our right and the glorious Trump Tower directly ahead. Thanks to Matt Byrne and George for organizing the cruise and the lunch at the Columbia Yacht Club. And thanks to Randy Streblov and Steve Horton for transporting some of the boats to Chicago.

When we first began talking about the pre-show events two years ago, we asked ourselves: "What do we have here at Lake Geneva that makes this place so special?" The answer was the boats, the estates, and of course the lake. The lake is a jewel, pristine and crystalline. None like it anywhere. Then we tried to pick out estates, not just any estate, but estates that had something extra. The Griffith Estate with the wonderful woodwork, the boat collection, the Smithsonian registered arboretum was a natural. The Otzen Estate with its gardens, museum and car collection was outstanding, and the Smith Estate with the wonderful interior and furnishings was spectacular. The Gage boats, and other historic vessels that are part of Lake Geneva's history helped tell our story. To each one, thank you for opening your homes, and thank you Charles Colman and Steve Mack for your help.

The Wednesday Evening Welcome reception in the Ferro Pavilion at George Williams College was a delight. The musical welcome by the Music by the Lake Singers was spectacular. Watching those enthusiastic young people singing and dancing from their hearts, and

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# BLACKHAWK CHAPTER

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fellow Blackhawk Members:

Fall is upon us and all too soon we will be in the holiday season. It seems like just last week we were putting the boats in the water and getting ready for summer. Now we are laying up and preparing for the cold months ahead.



This was a busy year for the Blackhawk Chapter and the summer went by fast. From the Chicago Show in January to the Fall Dinner in October we had a lot of events and great participation from many members.

I would like to share with you a few of the milestones we have accomplished this year:

- Our chapter membership has increased to 322 active members. This represents about a 15 % increase in membership over the past 12 months.
- We initiated a youth group this spring led by Dave Vogeler and Tom Wagner with a group of twelve kids ranging in age from 6 to 17 years old. The group completed a restoration of a 1950's Wolverine outboard runabout that was re-christened at the Geneva Lakes Boat Show this past September.
- The Blackhawk Chapter along with the Glacier Lakes Chapter hosted the 2011 ACBS International Boat Show & Meeting at the Abbey Resort this September. With over 150 boats in the water and another 25 on land, this was the largest boat show ever assembled in ACBS history. Over 600 members and guests attended the Saturday awards dinner.
- Over 100 Blackhawk members and guests attended the Blackhawk Fall Dinner at the Fox River Valley Boat Company showroom. This was a fabulous evening complete with an 18 piece swing band, the Ocean Blu Big Band.
- The Blackhawks presented checks to charitable organizations totaling \$4000 for 2011.

I would like to thank the entire membership for your contributions for making the 2011 year a success for our chapter. We accomplished a lot this year and hopefully we will continue to expand in 2012 with new goals and challenges. Enjoy the holidays with family and friends and I look forward to seeing you all in the spring.

Best Regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MSvoboda', written over a white background.

Mark Svoboda

# THE STREBLOW MISTIQUE

RANDY STREBLOW 1945 - 2011

Randy Streblov began working in his father's shop when he was 12 years old. Initially he made bungs, cleaned saw dust and shavings out of the bilge of new boats, and sanded – a lot of sanding – because, Randy would later say, “That’s what makes the job.” Fifty-four years later he was still working, now seven days a week, often 10 or 12 hours a day, wearing his red Streblov hat and Streblov shirt, still “making the job... right!” I never saw anyone who lavished as much love and care on “his boats” as Randy did.

“I’m blessed,” he told me, “I enjoy my work so much there’s nothing I would rather do.” Warming to his subject, Randy extolled the virtues of his boats: “The whole boat is a Streblov design. The transom, bottom, and bow are unique to these boats. Everything is custom-made: the hardware, lifting rings, and cleats are all special. Every boat is custom designed. Each owner wants special features such as a teak deck or a swim platform, and sometimes a unique seating arrangement, and we design and build inside the boat just what the customer specifies. And the boats perform as well as they look.” How proud he was of every boat he created!

Randy’s customers loved him. He had a rare quality of bonding with his customers, all of whom became life-long friends. More than one person said that when they talked with Randy about buying a boat, they felt he was interviewing them to see if they were worthy of owning a Streblov. Indeed, you had the feeling that the boat was only on loan to you ..... as long as you took good care of it. One customer asked about the warranty. Randy’s answer was: “If it’s our fault we fix it, period.”

Randy was a teacher as much as a builder. “Building boats is an art,” Randy would say,” but it isn’t art alone, it’s science as well. It’s a balanced combination of the two. The other things are the workmanship and the materials. It’s a combination of everything we do. Our goal is to use the best of everything there is.” Indeed, Streblovs are known far and wide for their rock-solid, durable construction. I never knew a boat that had a more solid feel to it as it skipped over the waves. As long as there are those who appreciate fine wood and excellent craftsmanship, there will always be a place for Streblov boats.

Randy and I had an affinity over the years because of our common interest in boats, particularly wooden boats. We could always find some feature or detail to talk about, and Randy always had ideas. Over the years, as we saw each other from time to time, it was as if we had never missed a beat. He would look up and give me that big grin, his eyes would twinkle and in his cheery voice he would call out: “How ya doin’?” But the way he said it spoke more than the words. He really meant “I’m glad to see you!” We would then pick up where we had left off months before and Randy would remember exactly what we were talking about and he would say, “I’ve been thinking about that, and what you should really do is....” And he would have the answer for me.

I was always interested in seeing what Randy had in his shop. He would point things out to me and say, “Look at this.” And he would show me a new hatch lift or interior arrangement he was working on. We talked about design, construction, hull shape, and materials. Whatever it was, Randy had already been there and had ideas. Ideas that were soundly based

*(Continued on page 4)*



*Randy taking people for a boat ride at the 2011 International Boat Show*

on experience and what worked and what didn't work. His advice was honest and given without any thought except to help, to save the listener from making a mistake. And he saved me from making many. "You know," he would start off, "you have to be careful how you do that... a lot of people don't realize what it takes." and then he would impart a little gem of wisdom.

Last October we went to the Warner auction in Minnesota together and what a great time we had. For me it was an education, like listening to an oracle. We walked slowly down each aisle looking at each boat and Randy would say, "Now look at this boat, the sides have sprung out, not enough support, it should have another bulkhead." And then the next boat, "Look at the way this boat has lost its shape. You'd have to take it completely apart to get the frame back where it belongs." And sometimes, the most damning offense in Randy's eyes, "This guy didn't take proper care of his boat!" And he was always right on target. He knew the boats, and he knew what to look for.

One of the last times I was with Randy, and it was a high point for both of us, was our trip to Chicago for the Blackhawk- ACBS Chicago River Cruise. We were in Lake Michigan, cruising along the shore line. I turned around and saw Randy sitting quietly in the boat, a smile on his face, just sitting there in the sunshine enjoying the ride. Only later did I realize it was to be his last outing and he was savoring every minute.

At the Lake Geneva Antique and Classic Boat Show a few weeks ago, I watched Randy giving rides in one of his Streblov masterpieces. He wasn't selling, he was sharing his still youthful sense of excitement so others could experience the same thrill, the same exhilaration that he still felt when he pushed the throttles forward and felt the boat accelerate and push him back in his seat. He loved the roar of the engines and the response of the boat. Although he was in great discomfort at the time, you would never know it. He told me later that day that Steve Horton had joined the company and it gave him a great comfort to know that Steve and his daughter, Kris, were going to be partners so the business would continue for another generation with the same high standards.

We will all miss Randy. Somehow we thought he would always be there, like the most solid of anchors. He was completely honest and trustworthy. We all knew his ready smile, his warm "How ya doin?" always with a recollection of when he last saw you and a question to show he cared about you. There is no question he touched all of our lives and we all have special memories of him. There was never a word of discouragement, he kept his suffering to himself. It was a delight to be in his company and that is the way I want to remember him - the loyal friend, always trying to help with never a thought of personal gain. Always teaching, always striving to improve, to do the best that he could do. We all shared in the joy of his life, and we are the richer for having known him.

Larry Larkin  
November 1, 2011



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## Smoke Signal Editor Needed!

My tenure as Smoke Signal editor will be ending at the end of the year. After 5 years it's time for some new blood. Please consider volunteering for this position in the club. There are no special talents required, trust me if I can do any one can. We have a good group of people that contribute content on a regular basis, so you are not responsible for writing the entire newsletter. There are not special computer skills needed. I use Microsoft Publisher (similar to Microsoft Word) but you can use anything you're comfortable with. We have a company that handles all the printing and mailing. I would also be available to help anyone get started.



(Continued from page 1)

seeing the audience respond was something I'll never forget. And the Wisconsin style camp dinner with burgers and brats followed by a moon-lit boat ride back to Fontana on the Lady of the Lake. What a special evening. Thank you Music Director Christine Flash and campus staff.

Friday evening at the Driehaus Estate! When the first group from ACBS came out to see what we had to offer two years ago, I told them I thought this would be a spectacular finale. I read recently that the estate is the most photographed home in Wisconsin. When we took the first group of guests across the lake in one of the historic steam yachts, I watched as the guests got off the boat and walked up the flag-lined path to the illuminated mansion. To a person they stopped in awe, not quite believing what they were seeing – the gardens, the water features, the children's village, the art, the collections, everything so special, so unique. And the return boat trip across the lake to the Lake Geneva Country Club in the boats, now outlined with festive lights, I don't think ever in our lifetime will we have such an experience again. Thanks to Richard and Inese Driehaus for opening their home.

This year's show had over 150 boats in the Abbey harbor and 30 on land. To put this in perspective our previous record was 104 boats total. The variety and quality of the boats were unprecedented.

Over 600 members and guests attended Saturday evening's awards dinner where several Blackhawk members were presented awards. Andrew Vogeler won the Jr. Craftsmanship Award for his 1956 15' Milo-Craft Valkyrie "Got Woody?". Paul Miller won Best Canoe for his 1915 16' W.T. Bush Canadian Strip "Two Tone". Peter Mueller took home 2 awards: Most Original for his 1956 17' Willits Bros. Canoe and Best Outboard Race Boat for his 1929 12' Old Towne Raceplane "Nonsense II". Larry Lange was the big winner of the evening taking home 3 awards including the Youth Judging Award, Best Classic Runabout (Restored) and peoples Choice for his 1947 20' Ventor Finned Runabout.

On Sunday Mecum Auctioned off nearly over 70 boats. Not every boat sold but many people walked away new antique and classic boat owners. We hope that the auction will become an annual event.

And to the volunteers from the Blackhawk and Glacier Lakes Chapters, and to our guests, at the end of the day it's the people who make the show... Thanks to each of you for contributing your time and talent and making it happen.

A Special thanks also goes out to the boat show committee: Larry Larkin, Mark Svoboda, George Plamondon, Al Bosworth, Larry Lange, John Barrett, Ted Carter and Matt Byrne.





## Classified Corner FOR SALE

**FOR SALE:** 1953 Century Viking 19', rebuilt Graymarine 620 engine, dual side steering. Full cover and dual axle trailer included. In water at the Pewaukee Boat Show this year. \$3100. Ted 847-395-8902

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**FOR SALE:** 1957 20' Chris-Craft Holiday, in good-shape, new cover, newer trailer, and has 175 hp. I'm asking 12,000 OBO. Cell# 847-648-0138

**FOR SALE:** 1964 Lyman 25ft. Sleeper model Cuddy cabin w/marine head 327 cu. in. Gray Marine Fire ball engine All canvas including bimini, side curtains and mooring cover Includes: 6,000 lb. all galvanized Karavan trailer. \$16,000 CALL Ken 414-764-5949 or Email for more pictures [kbourgeois1@wi.rr.com](mailto:kbourgeois1@wi.rr.com) ( stored indoors and can be seen anytime with appointment)

**FOR SALE:** Chris Craft Engines K 100HP, KL 105HP, KLO 105HP, M 130HP, ML 145HP, MCL 175HP, also a dual carb 135HP Chrysler Crown. Ted 847-395-8902

### Blackhawk Smoke Signal Advertising Policy

Individual Blackhawk Chapter members may run a single complimentary non-commercial advertisement in any issue of the Smoke Signal. Individual advertisements will not be rerun unless the editor is notified prior to publication of the following issue. The editor reserves the right to edit if necessary to fit available space.

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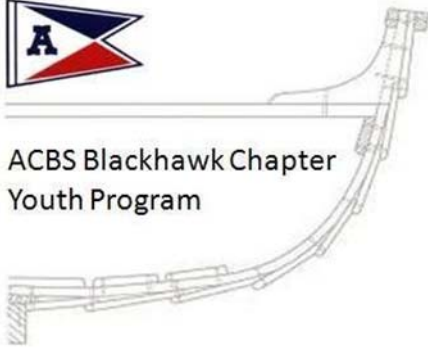
Commercial advertisements will be run in each issue published during the course of the year unless prior arrangements are made. Six issues per year are published. The following rates apply for commercial advertising, on a per year basis. Contact your editor for more information:

	Business card sized	Quarter page	Half Page	Full Page
Members	\$40	\$80	150	\$300
Non-Members	\$60	\$100	170	\$320

Provide all advertisements to: Matt Byrne Phone: 630-802-2698 E-mail [MattByrne@mrbtech.com](mailto:MattByrne@mrbtech.com)



ACBS Blackhawk Chapter  
Youth Program



# The Blackhawk Youth Group

The Blackhawk Youth Group launched their project boat at the Geneva Lakes show on Saturday September 24th. After 6 months of work it was fun to see the project come to life. Although the weather was a bit damp the spirits were high. Pastor Eric Neider offered a blessing for the boat and all who sailed in her. With the team looking on, the boat was launched and the boat rides began! Congratulations to the youth group and all of our sponsors who help to make this project successful.





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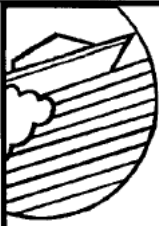
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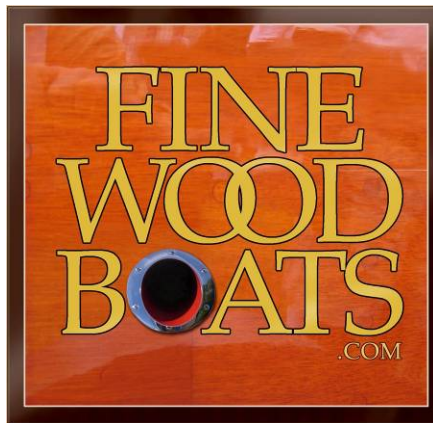


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