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Camaraderie Abounds at ABBRA Symposium

New ABBRA event brings old friends together

Warren, Rhode Island—The American Boat Builders & Repairers Association (ABBRA) Summer Symposium Networking & Social Event concluded last Tuesday after two days of intimate roundtable talks, evening receptions, and panel discussions. The event has been touted as highly successful by ABBRA staff, conference participants, and sponsors.

“The overall mood at the event was one of camaraderie,” says Doug Domenie, ABBRA’s president. “I continued to hear attendees comment on the networking opportunities and overall educational experience. This was the type of event ABBRA is known for—peers getting together to talk and learn from each other.”

Sessions at the ABBRA Symposium included an in-depth discussion of the economic past, present, and future, as well as an eye-opening commentary on preparing for such modern day risks as the flu pandemic and the approaching hurricane season, and closed with a high-spirited discussion of how yard managers can best protect themselves from the legal pitfalls.

According to ABBRA staff, feedback from attendees revealed that many were particularly engaged in the regulatory session on Monday afternoon. A panel of representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) fielded audience questions on a variety of topics including commonly misunderstood issues of boat owner liability, confusing ladder regulations and multiple procedures for the proper disposal of hazardous material.

“The first day of the Symposium ended with a beautiful sunset dinner overlooking Newport Harbor where information continued to be shared,” says Domenie. The Symposium—sponsored by Interlux Yacht Finishes, Awlgrip North America, *Professional BoatBuilder* magazine, 3M, and Starkweather & Shepley Insurance—concluded with private tours of three influential New England boatyards: Newport Shipyard, Hinckley Yacht Services, and Conanicut Marine Services where participants viewed a closed-loop pressure-washing system that uses rain water to mitigate storm water erosion and town water usage.

The American Boat Builders and Repairers Association (ABBRA), founded in 1943, strengthens and encourages professionalism in the boat building and marine service industry by providing its members with timely information, training, education and business services.

ABBRA: Dedicated to the Service and Repair Industry.

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