

# TMTA NEWS

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Our 39<sup>th</sup> Year

January 2004

*EDITOR'S NOTE: This new format for the newsletter will be used in the future so that we can distribute the newsletter primarily by email. If you are getting the newsletter by email, we will not send it by snail mail to save the Association the cost of printing and mailing. IF you would like it to be sent to several email addresses, please let us know, that is no problem at all. If you don't have email, we will continue (reluctantly) to mail the newsletter the old way. Thanks for your cooperation.*

## Presidents Message by Mark Drexler

Fellow TMTA Members, I hope that everyone had a good holiday.

Now that we have entered 2004 we need to make personal and business plans for the future. Your TMTA Board of Directors and Officers are busy planning for the future of our Association. 2004 will be a pivotal year for the success of our Trade School initiative. This may be the only real chance we have to set up a Marine Trade School in our area. Each of us has a chance to have input in organizing and utilizing this school. I invite all members to participate in the process. This school will be successful only if we have the support of all members of TMTA.

I believe that the biggest problem facing the marine industry today is lack of certified and qualified technicians and craftsmen and women. The labor pool for the knowledgeable painters, fiberglass finishers, mechanical repair technicians and electricians in the marine industry is lacking in our area and throughout the country. I believe we can begin to solve this in our area with the creation of a Marine Trade School.

Our speakers at the next general meeting will focus on our efforts with the Marine Trade School. I invite each of you to attend this meeting and share your thoughts about the school and how it will impact your business. I strongly advise everyone to complete the surveys that were sent to you.

I look forward to seeing you at our meeting on January 21st. Sincerely, Mark Drexler

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## Next Meeting's Speaker is Tom Murray on the Trade School Survey: January 21, 2004 at 6:30 PM

- Pilot House Restaurant, Topping, VA Call (804) 785-2628 to make your reservation. If there is no answer, please leave a message!
- Guest Meal Fee: \$15.00
- Menu: Tossed Salad, Broiled Scallops, Fried Chicken, Scalloped Potatoes, Cole Slaw, Rolls & Desert

PLEASE BE SURE TO CALL FOR RESERVATIONS AT LEAST BY MONDAY SO THAT THE PILOT HOUSE CAN BE READY FOR US!

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## Marine Industry Workforce Development by Tom Murray, Marine Business Specialist, VIMS College of William & Mary

As we all know, marine industry workforce development is vital to the future of recreational marine industry in the mid-Atlantic region. Without an adequate pool of qualified employees the industry cannot continue to grow and the entire coastal economy will suffer. Marine trades are prevalent throughout the Chesapeake region. Under the general heading of "Marine Trades" are a host of private enterprises that define marine recreation as a business; and, as such, are crucial elements serving the needs of coastal watercraft users. As providers of necessary inputs, services and materials, in addition to providing a physical interface for boat access, the marine trades combine to provide requisite support for all commercial and recreational watercraft; including large and small boats, private boat anglers, charter boats, head boats, tourist boats, etc.

All of these groups represent activities that to varying extents support the economies of Virginia's coastal cities, rural areas and towns. At the same time, the provision of infrastructure in the form of marinas, boatyards, launching ramps, boating and the fishing activities themselves, increase the sustainable economic value derived from the environment. In a direct way the marine trades allow for the transfer of natural resources into economic resources that provide employment, income, value-added exports and tax base to the coastal communities.

Within the four state areas from North Carolina to Delaware there were over 2,000 marine-related businesses including over 1,650 marinas and boatyards. Additionally hundreds of marine service and supply firms, boat builders and other

support industries are necessary to serve marinas and boatyards which ultimately serve owners of the 850 thousand registered recreational watercraft in the region.

## **Pilot Work Force Training Needs Assessment**

As a result of the efforts initiated at an initial Marine Trade Workforce Development Steering Committee (Workforce Committee) meeting held April 30, 2003 in Lancaster Virginia, funding was sought and received by the Northern Neck Planning District Commission (NNPDC) from federal and state agencies. The Workforce Committee has continued to work on a unified approach to the issue that will be of help to marine industry and all of Tidewater Virginia. A Work force training needs assessment survey has been distributed to marine industry from New Jersey through North Carolina to assess the regional market for enhanced marine trade's education. While the surveys are just out in other states, early returns in Virginia are quite encouraging and should provide the kind of information that will assist the Workforce Committee, and all interested in this type of education, in developing meaningful educational programs for marine industry and Tidewater Virginia communities.

The final results of the survey will be compiled by VIMS by the end of February and, together with the NNPDC Workforce Training Committee, a final plan of action and strategy to develop and implement marine trades educational program will be completed in the spring.

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## **The Landings School in Maine is interested in Partnering with the Tidewater Marine Trade School contributed by Don McCoy**

During the most recent committee meeting, Ken Shevil Associate Director of The Landing School, Kennebunkport, Maine was introduced and proceeded to give an overview of his school. The school was founded in 1978, as the result of expressed needs of the boating community in the area. The first instructional facility was a converted cow barn. Twenty five years later, the Landing School sits on a five acre campus, with a 7000 square foot marine system laboratory. The curriculum offered includes boat building and design, as well as marine systems repairs. Mr. Shevil was quick to point out that each program has a formidable advisory committee comprised of noteworthy individuals in the industry, and that the school's continued presence is the result of a strong and committed leadership. The Landing School receives between \$30,000 and \$50,000 annually from industry donations. Where the total enrollment for all three areas of study varies in the neighborhood of 68 students, the Marine Systems Program is limited to 24 students, with tuition of \$13,000 for the full time forty week program. Mr. Shevil explained, "The Marine Systems Technician program is a comprehensive, full-time, forty week program designed to meet the technical training needs of students who seek employment in the marine industry. As such, the curriculum has been designed to prepare students to install, maintain and repair contemporary boat systems to established industry standards e.g. those of the American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC), U.S. Coast Guard and International Standards Organization." He went on to note that most of the students were enrolled for professional development, and that all had some previous experience in the trade. During Mr. Shevil's presentation a discussion ensued in which it was determined, at least for the onset, that the Northern Neck School will focus on the Marine Systems Technician Program, and that our program will probably deviate somewhat from the Landing School model. Mr. Shevil emphasized an interest on the part of the Landing School with regard to this initiative, and looked forward to working with us as this project develops. Addition information can be gained from the Landing School Website <http://www.landingschool.org/>

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## **Virginia's General Assembly is Set to debate the Bottomland Rent Issue-** by Pete Hall

Bottomland Royalties Issue... The possibility of having to suddenly pay 15 years worth of bottomland royalties should be of great concern to all members businesses who have docks or other structures on or over state owned bottomlands. In the September issue of this newsletter we reported that the soon to convene legislative session in Richmond would be considering the lifting of the 15-year moratorium on rents and royalties for the use of state owned bottomlands.

At our November dinner meeting Representative Albert Pollard, who has been active on this issue, reviewed with us the history of this issue and where it is heading and what effect it might have on our businesses. Most of us went away from the meeting thinking we had nothing to worry about. Pollard felt that the issue would most likely not get the needed support in the General Assembly to lift the moratorium.

We'll take note and get ready to take action!!! An article in the December 2003 issue of VAMI's (Virginia Association of Marine Industries) Newsletter paints a rather different picture. According to the article the Warner Administration has advocated lifting the moratorium. The Governor's proposed Budget for 2004 includes the following statement: "It is the intent of the General Assembly that by July 1, 2004, the Marine Resources Commission shall collect all fees and royalties assessed by the Commission for the use of state-owned bottomlands."

The VAMI article goes on to say that Warner's Budget also notes that, "Prior to resuming the collection of any such fees, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall review the report of the Virginia Delegation of the Chesapeake Bay Commission." The VAMI article continues "Warner's proposal will be hotly debated at the General Assembly, particularly

as the Virginia Delegation to the Chesapeake Bay Commission made no recommendation on the moratorium at its November meeting."

While delegation chairman and retiring State Delegate Bob Bloxom had looked at the hearings as a vehicle for legislation lifting the moratorium, delegation members remained divided. The lack of action followed the delegation's September 29 meeting, when it unanimously agreed to adopt the legislative approach and allow the Virginia Marine Resources Commission to collect rents and royalties. At its November hearing, the delegation reviewed proposed legislation lifting the moratorium. That draft included a provision blocking the retroactive collection of unpaid rents and royalties.

The tone for the latest hearing was set by Delegate Glen Oder ( R-Newport News). Oder was not a member of the Delegation but was allowed to address the hearing before it got underway. Oder, whose district includes a large number of private and commercial waterfront properties, said, "I am completely opposed to this. I think this the wrong direction to be going in... waterfront property owners already are paying a fee on this through their property tax assessments. It really boils down to what's fair. I don't believe that what you have in front of you today even begins to address fairness."

Delegation member, Taylor Murphy, the Secretary of Natural Resources, spoke in favor of lifting the moratorium, noting the importance of balancing the rights of property owners with the State's interests. He asked, "Would the State allow someone to occupy the Ninth Street Office Building rent free? What we are talking about here is extensive use of State-owned land for a particular purpose."

Delegate Thelma Drake (R-Norfolk) said she did not believe the draft legislation adequately addressed all issues. Drake said, "We're only halfway there. At this point, we have no plan. We haven't been able to put this together." Bloxom agreed that the delegation was unable to reach consensus, noting Murphy's office would have to make a plan for collecting rents after reviewing the delegation's report.

The General Assembly also would have to approve lifting the moratorium before VMRC could begin collecting rents and royalties.

So where does that leave us? I say its time to circle the wagons. VAMI is opposed to lifting the moratorium, as is TMTA. VAMI is monitoring the issue closely and will continue to do so, but that's not enough. We need to contact our representatives in the General Assembly directly to voice our objection to this legislation. Elsewhere in this issue is a letter that you may copy to your letterhead and send to your representative. Don't delay, DO IT NOW!!!!

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## **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**

FISHING BAY HARBOR MARINA is owned and operated by Ron Hall. His marina is located near Deltaville, Virginia in a protected basin in Fishing Bay on the Piankatank River. Whether looking for a permanent or transient slip, cursing for adventure, in need of boat repair, or just looking to relax, it is the perfect place for your boating and vacationing needs. The marina has complete modern facilities and a highly trained staff to serve you. Fishing Bay Marina offers 110 covered and open slips, gas and diesel, a ship's store, a Captain's lounge, a large 25 meter swimming pool, as well as a clean and well maintained bathhouse and laundry

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## **Northern Neck Soil and Conservation District to hold meetings to receive inputs on what they can do to help the marine industry** by Rob Redfern

The NNSCD has contacted me to act as a representative of the marine industry to provide inputs on what is needed from them for alternative ways to prevent erosion along our shorelines. They will be meeting at the NNPDC offices in Warsaw on January 20, 2004 from 11:30-1:30. I'll keep you posted!

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If you are receiving this Newsletter via mail and would like to get it via Email, please contact Ken Knull at [ken@yankeepointmarina.com](mailto:ken@yankeepointmarina.com) or call 804-462-7018

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Editors: TMTA Board of Directors  
Tidewater Marine Trade Association of Virginia  
P.O. Box 40, Cobbs Creek, VA 23035

Stamp

January 14, 2004

Delegate/Senator

RE: Lifting of Moratorium on Rents and Royalties for State-Owned Bottomland

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

As a citizen of Virginia, a marina owner, a member of the Tidewater Marine Trade Association and a taxpayer, I want to strongly express my opposition to Governor Warner's proposal to lift the 15 year Moratorium on Rents and Royalties for State-Owned Bottomland. This change would put a significant hardship on our business and all of the other marina businesses that I am aware of.

Our marina has been in place for many years and has been bringing tourism dollars into the local and state economy all of that time. However a marina is a very low profit margin business and we are constantly being bombarded with additional regulations and permit requirements and each one takes another bite out of our dwindling income.

**Please vote no to lifting the moratorium.** I will remember your record on this issue at election time. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,