

# The Bilge Pump

41st Chapter of the Antique & Classic Boat Society

Vol. 9 no. 2

Rocky Mountain Classics

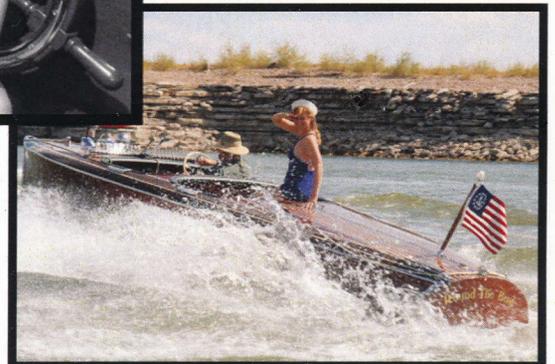
Fall 2007/Winter 2008



*Classically,  
Lake Pueblo  
goes retro*



**Photographs by  
Louisa Hansen**  
*See more info  
pages 2 and 9*



# *And those running the ship*

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### *Cover who's who*

The blonde beauty featured in Louisa Hansen's photos of the Lake Pueblo show in September is Sarah Bruestle riding around in Chip Taft's Chris Craft Custom Barrelback. With Sarah on Mark Mihelich's and Pat Henrikson's big Chris Craft cruiser is Monica Koncilja. See story on page 9.



## The Bilge Pump



**Newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Classics  
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**Send ads and publishable materials to  
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### **Greetings,**

Having survived my first week as the new ACBS president, I want to briefly introduce myself and open this channel of communication.

The annual meeting and boat show at Lake George was highly successful. One milestone at the meeting was the vote to increase the dues (now \$50) to at least keep up with inflation.

I look forward to working with you. Chapter presidents are encouraged to attend the quarterly meetings of your board: winter in San Diego Jan. 25-26, spring near New Orleans, summer in Milwaukee, and the 2008 annual meeting again in Coeur d'Alene.

Happy — and safe — vintage boating.

**ACBS President Gene Porter**  
gporter@erols.com  
571-309-8807 cell

# From the Helm

## Greetings Fellow Boaters,

First of all, I thank everyone for a very successful and fun 2007 boating season. If you made it out to any of the club events this past summer I'm sure you would agree with me that a great time was had by all and that it was a fun summer. If you were not able to attend an event I hope you will be able to this coming season.

I congratulate Chris Ann Smith Braaf on being the recipient of this year's President's Cup Award. This award is presented each year by the president to a member whose dedication to the aims of the ACBS was exemplary during the past year. Chris Ann brought her one-of-a-kind '57 17' Chris-Craft Cavalier, *Chris' Craft*, to the Alcova and Frisco shows this past summer on her own since Bob was busy traveling.

In addition, she attended and represented our chapter at the Lake George hosting of the ACBS annual meeting and show at Clayton, New York, and she also pulled her boat — solo — Labor Day Weekend all the way to Flathead Lake in Montana, along with Richard and Lu Ball, to visit members Bob and Betty Moore, who moved there from Grand Lake.

In other matters, we need assistance in getting our chapter website up and running again. If you have any ideas or can offer any assistance please call me. We would first like to see if any club members are able to assist before we spend money in this area.

Another need is for providing Jim McGaughy with information to develop a permanent boat laminated display sheet that will be provided to each member for one of their boats. The club will pay for one per member. If you have more than one boat that you show you can get more, but you'll have to cover the cost. Please provide Jim with the specifics for your boat including owner's name(s), year, model, length, engine details, boat name and home city. See Jim's contact info on page 2.

I look forward to another great boating season in 2008 and hope to see as many of you as possible at as many events as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

**Mike Novick**

**Evergreen, Colorado**

**'55 Survivor and One of My Girls**

**michaelnovick@msn.com**

**303-674-5524 home and 720-244-3376 cell**

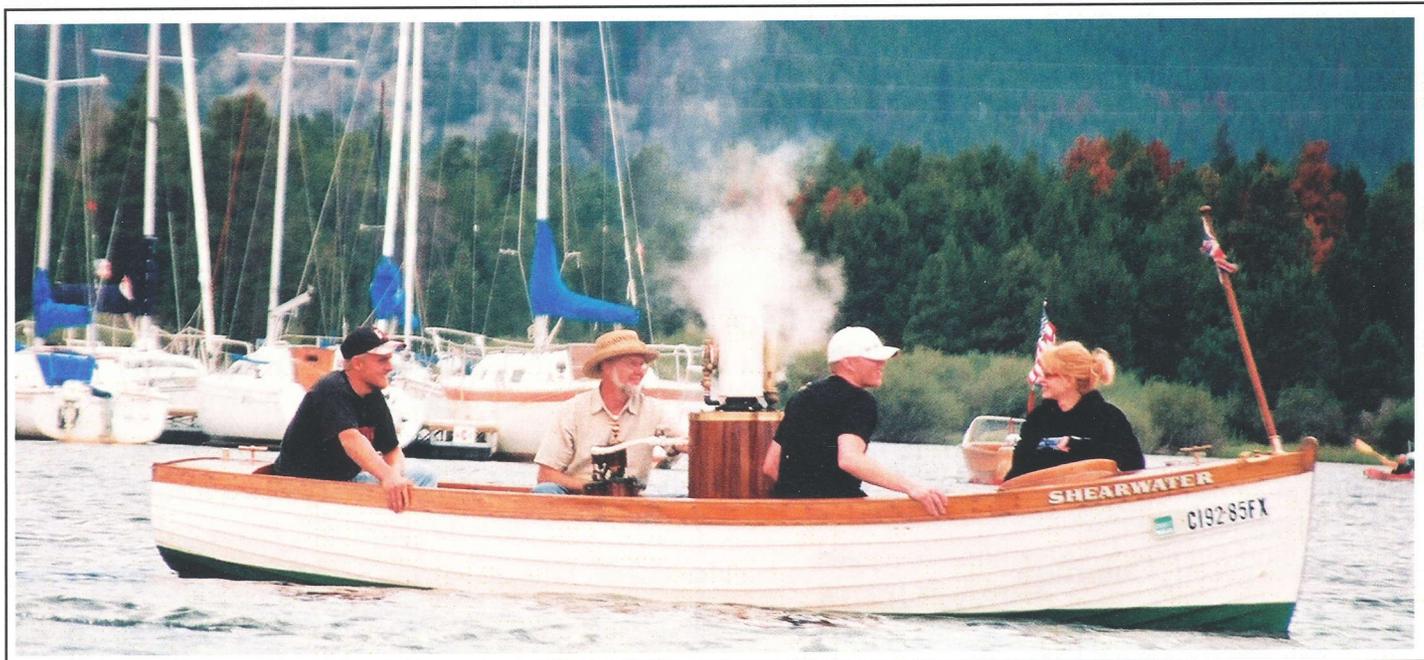
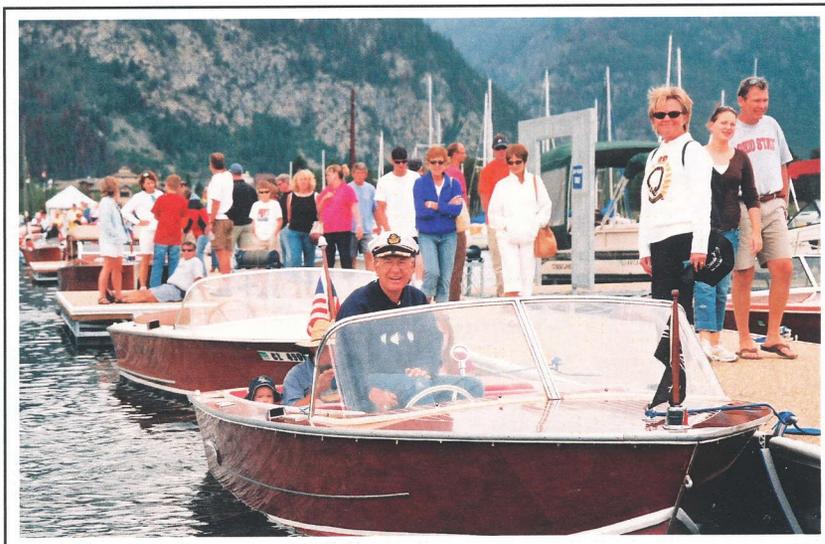


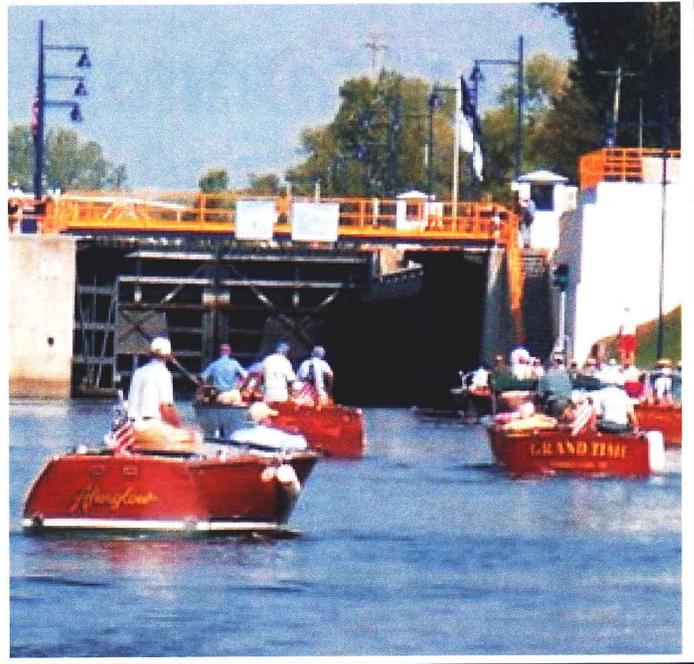
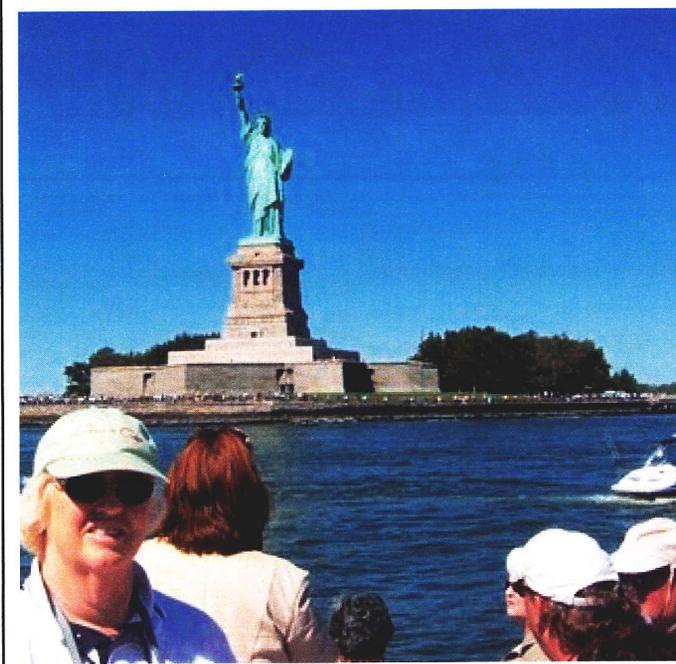
**Chris Ann Smith Braaf of Tabernash, Colorado, receives the President's Cup Award from Rocky Mountain Classics President Mike Novick.**



## *Frisko Bay a wowser!*

Top: The Michael and Kendra Novick clan's boat, a '56 23' Chris Craft Continental is always host to a good crowd. Middle: Richard and Lu Ball of Loveland and their *Ball Four Century*. Below: The father and son team of Bob and Daniel Phillips of Golden fire up the boiler in their 1900 16' English steam launch, *Shearwater*.





Lady Liberty watches as the ACBS flotilla heads up the Hudson River to Lake George.

## *Adirondack Adventure* | '07 ACBS International Meeting and Sixth Annual International Boat Show lure many to New York

By Chris Ann Smith Braaf

The 2007 ACBS International Annual Meeting and the Sixth Annual International Boat Show at Lake George in Clayton, N.Y., was preceded by a Hudson River cruise of 28 antique and classic wooden boats launched at Tarrytown, N.Y., on Friday afternoon.

Chris Smith, of the Chris Craft founding family, and two of his daughters, Joy and Chris Ann, arrived from Holland, Mich., with his 1962 27-foot Chris Craft Sea Skiff, the *Odyssea*, about 11 a.m., in hopes of a cruise around Manhattan. However, we had to wait for the tide to come in about 3 p.m. By the time we could launch we did not have time for the cruise. Tarrytown is about 20 miles north of Manhattan (the city).

Saturday was shuttle day and those not driving a car and trailer took a bus tour of the city. You really cannot see much of New York City from a bus. We did stop at Ground Zero. On Sunday we were treated to a cruise around Hudson Bay on the *Mariner III*, the classic 1926 122-foot fantail motoryacht. We saw much more of the city from the water than from a bus.

On Monday we were finally able to get to our boats. It was the first time since launch-

ing on Friday afternoon. They were all still floating. It was good to get into the small boat and start our cruise upriver. The Hudson River is 315 miles long. We cruised most of it, passing the Erie Canal on the third day of the cruise.

North of Albany the river gets shallow and there is a series of locks which connect the Hudson River with Lake Champlain. There were very few homes on the river. The railroad tracks followed the river on both sides. It appeared one side was for passenger trains and the other for freight. There were some awesome mansions on the hills above the river. West Point was a highlight of the first day.

On the second day Dad designated me captain. It was a beautiful, hot September day (80+ degrees). We passed many barges being towed or pushed on the river. We found a very nice metal dock with picnic tables and outhouses about noon. What a treat! We all had box lunches. It is amazing how 28 boats can start out at the same time with the same destination and yet not see more than four or five boats the whole day.

The third day started out with our first of

See New York on page 8

# Rocky Mountain Classics Chapter

Denver, Colorado

January 17-20, 2008

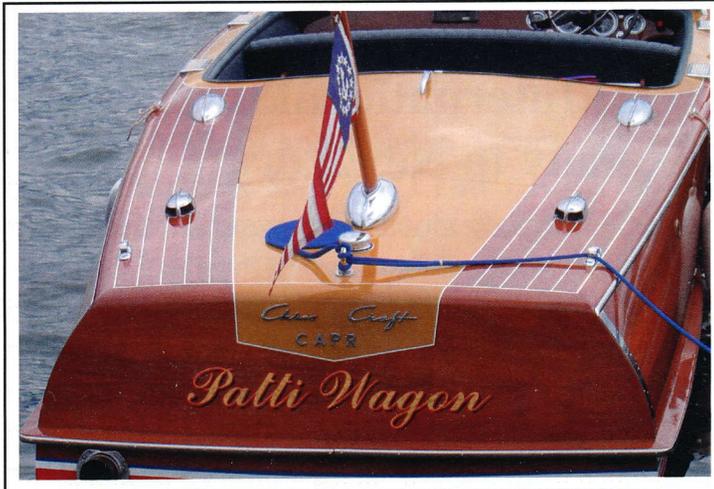
Antique and Classic Boat Static Display of the Rocky Mountain Classics ACBS Chapter at the Denver Boat Show, Colorado Convention Center. Contacts: Jerry Ross, 303-388-7651 and jcross1967@aol.com; and Jeff Waco, jeff54@earthlink.net and 303-421-3141. They will need some assistance. Call 'em.



Denver, Colorado

March 6-9, 2008

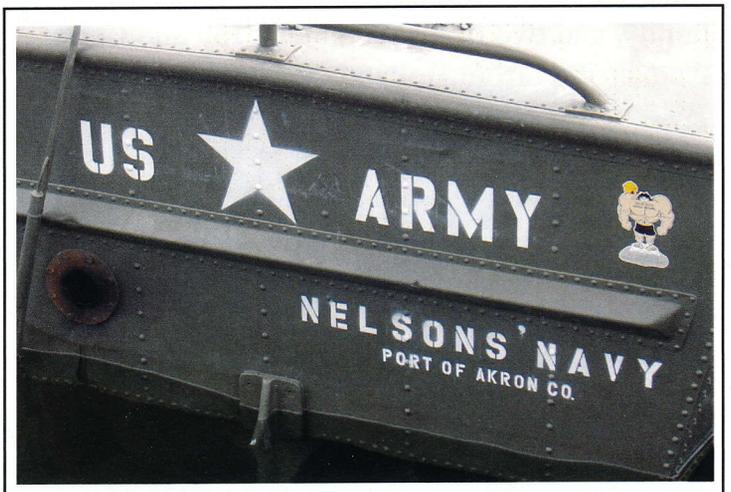
Antique and Classic Boat Static Display of the Rocky Mountain Classics ACBS Chapter at the Colorado RV, Sports, Boat and Travel Show, National Western Complex. Contact: Capt. Ron Ellis at 970-586-3242 and RockinR250@yahoo.com. A helping hand will be appreciated from members.



Lake Loveland, Loveland, Colorado

June 7, 2008

Spring Shakedown Cruise at Lake Loveland hosted by Richard and Lu Ball at their lovely lakeside home and expanded dock. Contact: Richard Ball at 970-667-3965 or at bglaw@comcast.net.



Top: Denver pilot Jim Brooks' '47 16' Chris Craft Special Runabout with a 95hp K engine.  
Middle: Evergreen, Colorado's Charlie and Patti Simons' '55 21' Chris Craft Capri.  
Bottom: Akron, Colorado's Nelson Family US Army aluminum single engine bridge boat.

# 2008 Boat Shows and Contacts



## Grand Lake, Colorado

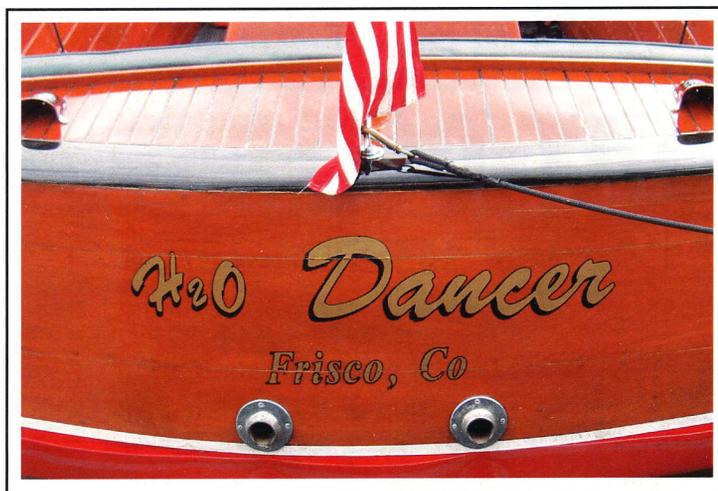
June 21, 2008

11th Antique and Classic Boat Rendezvous, at an elevation of 8,369 feet, Colorado's largest natural lake in the heart of the Rockies at the west entrance to Rocky Mountain National Park. Contact: Bob Braaf at 970-887-2210 or [bbraaf@msn.com](mailto:bbraaf@msn.com)

## Lake Dillon, Frisco Bay, Colorado

July 26, 2008

Rendezvous in the Rockies, at the Frisco Bay Marina on Lake Dillon at 9,017 feet above sea level, is next summer's major Rocky Mountain Classics ACBS Chapter-sanctioned show. Contact: Bill Tordoff at 970-668-8213 or at [AMSIINC@cs.com](mailto:AMSIINC@cs.com)



## Lake Pueblo, Pueblo, Colorado

Sept. 13, 2008 (tentative)

Second Annual Southern Colorado Classic Boat Show hosted by the Rocky Mountain Classics ACBS Chapter. Contact: Mark R. Mihelich, 719-252-1026 and [newcarsuck@yahoo.com](mailto:newcarsuck@yahoo.com)

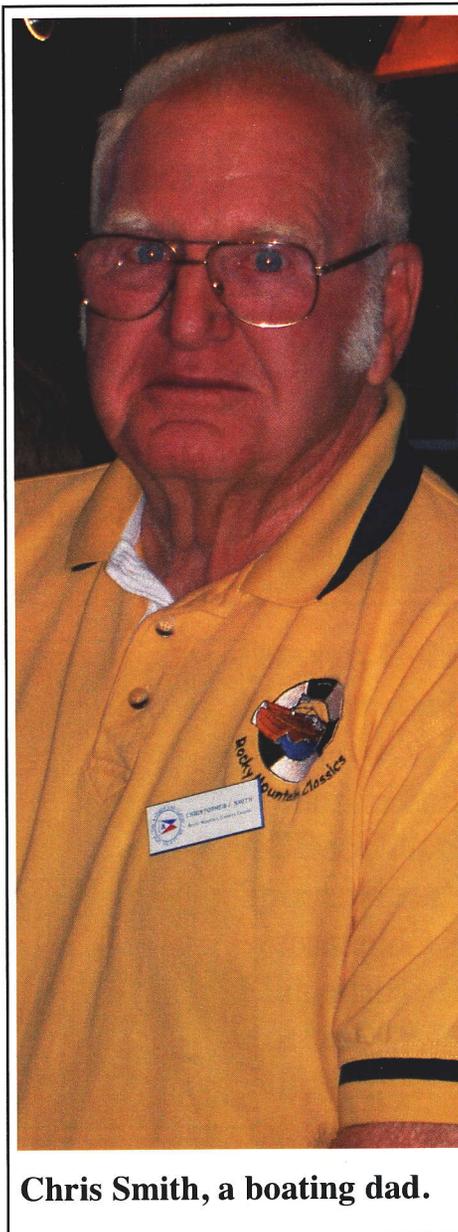
Top: Boulderites Tom and Kathy Lange's '46 16' Garwood Ensign with a Chevy V-8 210hp.  
Middle: Maggie and Pete Woods' '58 18' Chris Craft Sea Skiff named *Dragonfly*.  
Bottom: Jim and Connie Bull's '51 19' Chris Craft Holiday soon-to-be the *Connie J*.

**A New York trek from page 5**  
five locks. This was the only day we all stayed together. We filled the locks with just our party. We pulled the boats from a small bay near Schuylerville, N.Y. The bay was solid green with algae. The Adirondacks Chapter had a barbecue lunch ready for us and they helped load boats and wash them down, including Clorox in the bilge.

Overall, the whole trip was a great adventure.

After a 30-minute drive to Lake George we were too late to put in again and too late to register for the show. So, we checked in to the hotel and proceeded to the cocktail party hosted by Hall's Boat Corp. They let us in even without badges or tickets.

Launching on Thursday morning was another adventure. The boat ramp was accessed via a tunnel. *Odyssea* did not fit under the bridge. We were directed around the tunnel and jumped the curb, turned around



**Chris Smith, a boating dad.**

in a place we did not fit, and then the ramp was too shallow and we scraped the back of the trailer until it was nearly stuck. Fortunately, Dad has a prop guard on the trailer. It took four-wheel drive to get back out, jump the curb again, and head to a private launch ramp where they needed to untie a tour boat to let us out.

It was a foggy morning on the lake but we met up with Bob and Betty Moore and headed up the lake for a ride. What a great lake. There are many islands with docks and campsites, accessible only from the water.

The meetings went well.

The boat show went well.

There were many spectators, acquaintances, and good friends from all over the country and Canada, too. The banquet tent seated over 500 on Saturday night.

Next year's annual meeting will be at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

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# Lake Pueblo hosts Rocky Mountain Classics

By Angie Evans

Lake Pueblo went retro recently as classic boaters showed off shiny, varnished wooden-hulled boats that once were the pride of the nation's lakes and waterways.

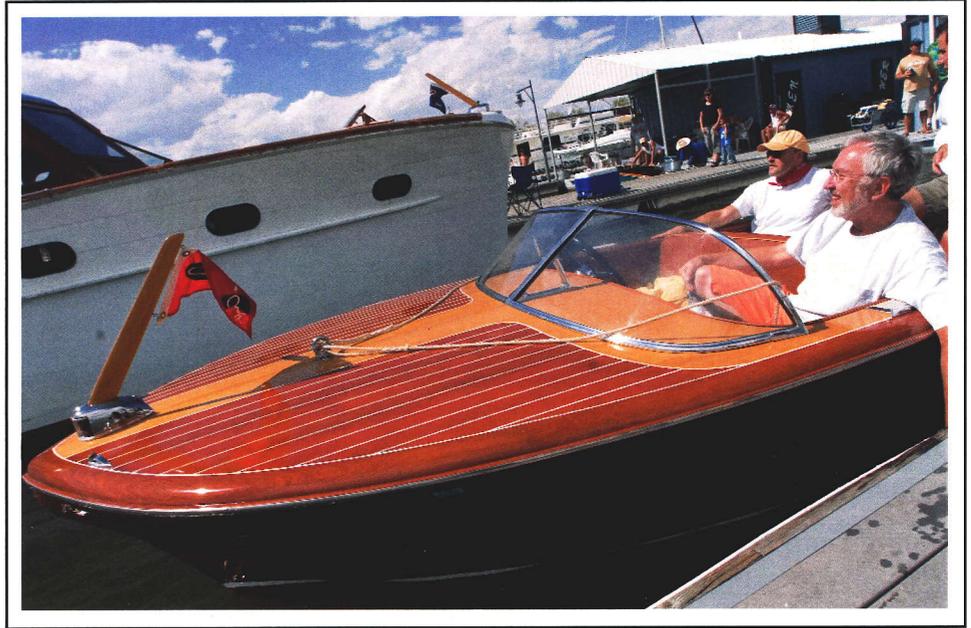
Owners docked a dozen boats dating from the 1940s to 1970s for a day of boat talk and enjoying the water at the first year's event of the Southern Colorado Classic Wooden Boat Show.

The mood: Casual and strictly nostalgic, as period tunes fit the floating setting perfected by warm temperatures and a sky barely dotted with clouds.

The feeling: There's just something about water and sunlight reflecting off varnished mahogany and chrome that can't be duplicated in fiberglass.

Pueblo's Mark Mihelich is serious about the restoration of his 1950 Chris Craft. The wooden boat still is riding on all its original scantlings except for just two hull planks.

Mihelich's attention to detail is apparent in the restoration in progress which is taking it back as close to original condition as possible. Everything is being done to the style of a half-century past, including the colors, finishes, and on board equipment. He is insisting on a strictly vintage approach to doing his boats. He would never consider modern power or updates, although some of the



**Charles Anderson basks in the September sun with his '57 Chris Craft Capri at Lake Pueblo State Park.**

**Mike Sweeney/Pueblo Chieftain**

chemistry of preservation has changed over the years, he admits.

It says a lot about the original design or these boats when you consider it has been in the water continuously since the fall 1949. He has redone much of the 41-footer 11-ton cruiser in his spare weekends over the last year and a half.

Mihelich dreams of taking a trip in his boat down the Sacramento River, along the West Coast and up the Sea of Cortez.

"It is a sort of publicity stunt to launch my tour company which I will be talking a lot of in the coming months," he said.

Boating is a family tradition for Mike Novick, who entered his 1955 Chris Craft Capri boat. He has been around

wooden boats most of his life.

"I remember working alongside my grandfather when I was 6," he said.

Novick is the president of the Rocky Mountain Classics Chapter of the Antique and Classic Boat Society, organizers of the activities.

The events included a retro bathing suit contest.

Mihelich wore colorful 1960's pinstripe trunks and Sarah Bruestle wore a blue, one-piece suit circa 1940s.

After the bathing suit contest, the boats lined up for a 5-mile parade around the lake with waterskiers in tow.

The Rocky Mountain Classics has about 100 members, mostly from Colorado, and a few from Wyoming and New Mexico, said Novick.

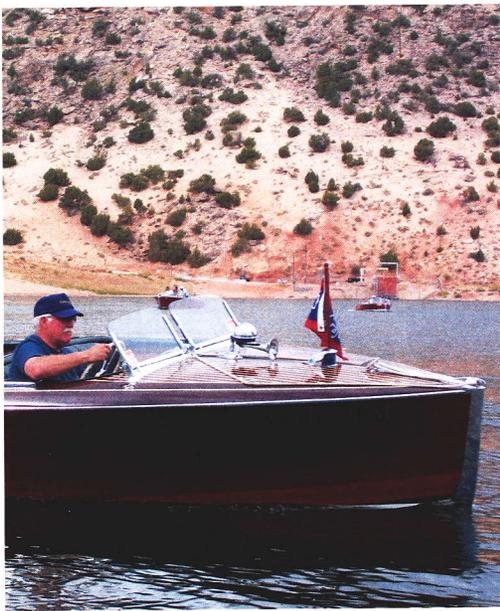
# Got some flotsam...

## Installment #2

In our spring *Bilge Pump*, I rambled on about our Antique and Class Boating Society Rocky Mountain Classics Chapter founding and first year. It was a tentative time, but we did have some fun.

1999, year two, began with high expectations — 33 members and \$572 in the kitty. Charlie and Katie Geuin, running the Ship's Store this year, remedied our shortfall in the treasury. If you haven't had the chance to meet these folks, look for them at the January 2008 static show in Denver. Here are a couple great founding members, with a wealth of boat knowledge, willing to share with all.

During our April '99 meeting, we discussed the possibility of a club newsletter and discussion of our possible logo was tabled. The first issue of our newsletter did appear, without a name, in May 1999. June Moharter is to thank for the first two-page beauty, hand-typed, that has morphed into our current issue of the *Bilge Pump*. I got 'em all. Editor number two, Katie Geuin, produced the August four-page newspaper, and the board quickly named it the *Bilge Pump* with thoughts of "getting all the club news out."



**By Chip Taft**  
*Round the Bend*  
1940 Chris Craft  
Custom barrelback  
.....  
**Chapter Historian**

Our first-in-the-water event for 1999, was held in June, at Horsetooth Reservoir, hosted by Jim and Julie Johnson. The famous "raft up" and hot dog cookout was a great hit, with some minor, participant boat top running. (Remember the oar running by Michael Douglas in "The Vikings" circa the '50s and you get an idea.)

Grand Lake was held on August 28 at the public docks, hosted by Bob and

Chris Ann Braaf and Bob and Betty Moore. Man did it rain! Now you know why it's been held in July ever since. Chris Smith, grandson of Christopher Columbus Smith, founder of Chris-Craft Corp., and Chris Ann's father, attended. He signed all our Chris-Craft books and regaled us at dinner with many great old stories of early life in and around the Chris Craft factory.

September 25, (not too late in Southern Colorado) found the club at Navajo Reservoir, hosted by Bob and June Moharter. This is truly a mini Lake Powell with high walled canyons and great swimming. We held our first Poker Run at this event.

The second annual meeting was held at the Sky Ute Lodge, near the lake with a report of 42 members to date; \$600 in Ship's Store stock was sold at the Grand Lake show. This has been a successful venture ever since because of some very dedicated members who have put in way too many hours manning the "store." Bob Moharter took over with his own father's gavel, as new pres-

**See Chip on next page**



**ACBS-RMC annual meeting in Frisco at Wayne and Cindy Spaulding's Boatyard Bar and Grill.**

**Chip continued from previous**

ident. Today, this gavel is with the current president of our club, Mike Novick.

Also, it was decided not to present an award for judged boats, as it would defeat the purpose of our club's thoughts, to remain an informal group. We did decide to

hold a "People's Choice Award" to be held at the discretion of the show host.

Chris Ann, whatever happened to the "Bent Shaft Award?"

I said I would include more than one year at a time, and I will, unless this gets too dry for you all, but I believe 1999 was a pivotal year that instituted most of

today's club routines and put our boat shows on the national agenda.

Again, not taking any of the credit for hard work away from other founding members, the greatest thanks for dedication goes to Bob and June Moharter.

More to come, what would you like to hear about?



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