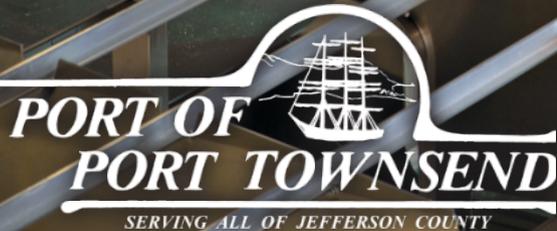


PORT REPORT

ECONOMIC VITALITY | COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
OPENNESS & ACCOUNTABILITY | STEWARDSHIP

Winter 2022 NEWSLETTER *from the* PORT OF PORT TOWNSEND



Brian Bertelson welds together an aluminum frame for ACI Boats, the Port's largest metal fabricator. *Submitted photo*

INSIDE: Petranek: Boat Yard treasures: 2 Berg: Yard expansion means jobs: 2 Family firm: Dave's Mobile Welding: 6

Commissioner's Corner

Boat Yard treasures visible in the spring

Jefferson County stretches across the Olympic Peninsula, with 237 miles of shoreline touching the Pacific Ocean, Salish Sea and Hood Canal.



By Pam Petranek
Commissioner
District 1

Most of Jefferson County's population resides on the eastern side of the Olympic Peninsula within the smaller Quimper Peninsula. Some 20 percent of our county's jobs are maritime related, with businesses rippling throughout the county. Our maritime trades have built international recognition, bringing boats and the people connected with them to this place. They create our community, culture and heritage.

Whether you are a boat buff or not, enjoy a walk or bike ride through the Boat Yard for a little spring treasure hunt to see for yourself how busy it is and what kind of boats are getting work done! If you come, please park in the nearby Haines Place Park and Ride adjacent to Kah Tai Lagoon. It's a short walk to the Boat Yard, where parking is always needed by workers and boaters. Start your tour with coffee, breakfast or lunch at one of the cafés serving our working waterfront! Connect with the people, boats and work.

As you marvel at all this energy and activity, reflect back to 1924, when our public voted and established the Port of Port Townsend in Jefferson County. Since 1911,

Washington State has established 75 ports. The goal of our Port is to be a world-class sustainable maritime industry and model for environmental best practices. Another milestone came in 1968, when the

first metal building in the port yard was built by Skookum Marine, which relocated here from Seattle. Skookum came to build fishing schooners, reinforcing the value and power of sailing, during a series of oil crises.

The next milestone came in 1974, when our Port bought the first Travelift to enhance access to marine trades. We now have 70-, 75- and 300-ton lifts. Today the Boat Yard is the crown jewel in our Port's treasure chest. Yard revenues, generated from hauling boats, and the space and time they stay in the yard, surpass all other port operations. Businesses flourish with a yard full of boats!

Metaphorically speaking, as Travelifts are the Port's golden goose, boats are the golden eggs. Fishing boats are finishing up long winter projects, and many more will be hauling out for spring maintenance as summer approaches and crews get ready to fish off the Pacific Northwest coasts. Port Townsend is home to much of the Alaska fishing fleet,

and Washington State is home to approximately 1000 commercial fishing boats. In the same gold vein, shipwrights are the golden keys for keeping these boats maintained, creating sustainable and multigenerational viability! Boats maintained from one generation to the next make the best use of resources. For decades, boat builders have started with a box of tools, designing, building, maintaining and repairing. Businesses are independent and inter-connected, building boats and momentum for all.

Our working waterfront is an overflowing treasure chest of boats, businesses, dreams and adventure. All of these people and boats connected together create our place, wealth and quality of life. Relationships and experiences are built along the way. Another generation rides the momentum from previous generations. We share a sense of gratitude and pride for living here, as well as a deep sense of responsibility. With much vigilance and participation, we can ensure that our limited resources are invested wisely for a healthy and sustainable maritime economy and environment.

Our working waterfront holds the golden goose, eggs and keys to a "bright and shiny" treasure chest, safekeeping our past, present and future resources!

From the Executive Director

Port's goal: Keep the Yard humming, the jobs coming

This Port Report is dedicated to sharing the stories of some of our maritime fabricators – people who make anything imaginable, right here, right now. Their stories are indeed remarkable, both for the capabilities represented on any particular project, but also for resiliency at the community level.



By Eron Berg
Port Executive
Director

This community still has the ability to survive in a world of disrupted supply chains, global economic disruption or natural disaster. Our maritime fabricators are a big part of that.

The Port's role is supporting maritime fabrication businesses and marine trades more broadly by ensuring generational viability of the Boat Yard. We know that the marine trades represent nearly 20 percent of the jobs in Jefferson County. But equally important to this place is the cultural significance of a true working waterfront and maritime community. Without the Boat Yard and the Port's marinas, this economic powerhouse and cornerstone of maritime culture would not exist.

The Port is laser-focused on generational viability of the Boat Yard. Nearly 50 years after the first marine Travelift was put into service (1974), we put into service a brand new 75 ton Travelift on Feb. 10, 2022. We are also working on four significant projects intended to

see the Boat Yard's success carry forward to future generations.

Those projects include two that can expand the Boat Yard.

One expands toward Sims Way by removing the Lombardy poplars, putting the electrical transmission lines underground, expanding the Boat

Yard by about 25 feet and replanting the Sims Way frontage with new trees more appropriate to the location. Another would expand west toward the bluff by about 3.7 acres to increase the capacity of the 300-ton yard (what we call the Ship Yard).

The smaller project is funded and once it is permitted it is ready to go. It will provide badly needed space in the Boat Yard. The bigger project is likely several years out, but if successful will increase the Port and marine trades' capabilities to serve the fishing fleet.

The other two projects, already funded, include replacing the existing moorage/yard office with a remodeled building that used to be the U.S. Coast Guard Station, and a \$2.7 million project to update stormwater drainage at the yard to ensure that the Port meets its environmental stewardship objective of discharging clean water into Port Townsend Bay.

All of our work happens in the light of day and with your help. The Port Commission and staff

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From teapots to subs and helicopters

Fabricator Peter Chaffee has done it all

Peter Chaffee was talking about his start as a fabricator when the door to Peter's Marine swung open. Again. A frequent customer was back to check on some aluminum fittings. He soon left happy.

"That's the way it is. All day long," said Chaffee, a youthful 67. Peter's Marine is unique in the Boat Haven at the Port of Port Townsend, Chaffee noted. It's a drop-in shop where welding or other fabrication work can get done quickly. There are many talented fabricators and welders at the Boat Haven, but most work on bigger projects scheduled long in advance. Chaffee is the one who will usually squeeze you in.

"I've built everything from the parts to a man-powered helicopter to parts for Paul Allen's submarine," Chaffee said. "And everything in-between."

The "in-between" work for boaters or the nearby bigger marine trades shops often includes railings, fittings, fuel tanks and other equipment. But local homebuilders have also discovered the benefits of working with Peter's Marine, which can turn out metal railings and other household features more quickly and sometimes at a lower cost than the same thing from wood.

Chaffee estimated that 60 percent of his work these days comes from outside the marine trades.

Still, it's boat work that brought



"I'm a fabricator," said Peter Chaffee of Peter's Marine. "To be a good fabricator you have to be able to see something in three dimensions."

Chaffee to the Boat Haven and where his decades of experience are most valued.

Born and raised in Southeast Alaska where his family did gyppo logging, he learned from his earliest years to be self-sufficient and, if needed, to fabricate parts that broke down. He worked for a shipyard in Seattle before moving to Port Townsend 23 years ago to open up his shop.

Chaffee and his wife Annette – owner of Cuts and Curls Beauty Salon – raised two daughters here, Morgan and Taylor.

While a few other Port-based marine trades workers have also been here more than two decades, Chaffee noted that he and shipwrights Dave

Thompson and John Glaser have been Port tenants for the longest time in their original locations. They've been called "the old guard," he said.

One part of being the old guard is to understand what's unique about the approach he and other master craftsmen take to metal work.

"I'm not a welder," he said. "I hate welding. I'm a fabricator. To be a good fabricator you have to be able to see something in three dimensions."

Where did he learn to do that? Chaffee pointed to his childhood, most of it in the remote Alaskan wilderness with his family of loggers.

"You can't just go to Walmart," he said. "You have to figure it out."

Among those who appreciate his fabrication skills are his Boat Haven business neighbors, like Key City Fish, Sunrise Coffee and Port Townsend Brewery. And he does specialized fabrication for boatbuilders ranging from big outfits like the Shipwright's Co-op and ACI Boats to an independent like John Glaser.

The frames for Paul Allen's submarine? They were 9 feet, 3 inches in diameter, he recalled of the job from some 20 years ago. The aluminum frame of the pedal-powered helicopter? Done according to specs, but Chaffee doesn't know if it ever flew.

As for a damaged stainless teapot brought in by some old gent who wanted to surprise his wife? "That was a no charge."



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Doing Business with the Port

How do I:

• Sign up for permanent boat moorage? Call the Boat Haven Moorage Office at 360-385-6211.

• Sign up for transient boat moorage? Call the Boat Haven Moorage Office at 360-385-6211, or the Herb Beck Marina (Quilcene) office at 360-765-3131. For boats or RVs at Point Hudson, visit www.pointhudsonmarina.com.

• Get a vessel hauled out? Call the Boat Haven Yard Office at 360-385-6211 to schedule.

• Become a tenant? Talk to Sue Nelson (snelson@portofpt.com).

• Pay a bill? Call the Boat Haven Moorage Office at 360-385-6211.

• Comment on or participate in a discussion of the Port Commission? Call Karen at 360-385-2323, or email info@portofpt.com.

• Attend a meeting of the Port of Port Townsend Commission? All meetings are open to the public. Regular meetings are the second Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. and the fourth Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. Workshops are held 2nd Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. Meeting agendas and supporting documents are accessed via the website, portofpt.com. Click on "Commission Meetings" and find the meeting you want. Each agenda includes links and information on how to attend a live meeting via Zoom. The Port also maintains full recordings and documents of all previous meetings.



ACI builds welded aluminum boats for pleasure, fishing - and for American Samoa

ACI Boats' owner, Cory Armstrong, grew up in the remote islands off British Columbia, where his parents settled after sailing from San Francisco to Canada in 1968. He and his brother built a small aluminum skiff to get to and from school.

By age 17, Armstrong was working fulltime as a lead night welder, while going to school during the day. Throughout the years he built his experience and dedication for catamaran aluminum boats.

Eventually his brother started Armstrong Marine in Port Angeles. Cory worked on marine-related projects, then joined his brother at Armstrong for 15 years. As partner and hands on Production Manager, Cory oversaw the design and production of hundreds of aluminum boats. After 15 years, he sold his portion of Armstrong Marine and spent

some time captaining boats in Alaska.

Before long he realized his next step was to start his own boat building company.

In 2015, he had the opportunity to buy Gold Star Marine, a long-standing marine repair and maintenance business at the Port of Port Townsend's Boat Haven. Gold Star had gone through multiple ownerships. Armstrong set out to rebuild Gold Star Marine into a trustworthy marine service center, as well start a new business that manufactured recreational and commercial aluminum boats.

Today, both Gold Star Marine and ACI Boats share 20,000 square feet of shop space in the Port. The businesses complement each other in workforce and services.

Now seven years in business, ACI employs 45 and manufactures about 12 new



Cory Armstrong, who founded ACI Boats and bought Gold Star Marine at the Port of Port Townsend, has been designing and building aluminum boats for most of his life. He's at the helm of a Bristol Bay gillnetter.

boats a year, ranging in sizes from 30-60 feet. Nearly all of the aluminum boats are catamarans, Cory's true passion. They include recreational boats, landing craft, Coast Guard-inspected passenger vessels, commercial crabbers and commercial Bristol Bay gillnetters. Armstrong has spent his entire career designing and refining the catamarans now built here in Port Townsend.

The CatLander, an asymmetrical catamaran landing craft is his most recent addition to the lineup. The first 30-foot CatLander with a 7,500-lb payload capacity was delivered locally to the Jamestown S'Kallam Tribe in

late 2021 as a spill response vessel.

Most manufacturing is done in house, including engineering, systems, cabinetry, paint and finishes, and upholstery. Outsourced components included large hull cut packages, but ACI Boats has just secured a MultiCam 5000 series CNC router, which will enable all aluminum cutting to be done on site.

"This is a huge step in streamlining our just-in-time manufacturing process, as well as making efficient use of our space," said General Manager Carrie Fiore.

Last year ACI launched its second Bristol Bay gillnetter

designed in collaboration with employee Mike Carr, who is a second-generation commercial fisherman experienced in Bristol Bay. While there, he started to notice a fresh generation of gillnetters using new technology and propulsion.

With a Naval Architecture degree from the University of New Orleans and experience working with Armstrong at ACI, Carr helped design a new gillnetter.

The result is a 32-foot by 15.5-inch sternpicker with twin Cummins 592HP engines, and twin UltraJet UJHT340s. The fast boat saw its first season during 2021's record-breaking

Bristol Bay run. The design was well received. Two more are on the way for 2023 delivery.

Like other marine trades, ACI has had its challenges. COVID, supply chain pressures that cause long lead times, increasing material costs and keeping a solid crew in an area with few housing options are among them.

Despite that, there has been a steady increase in business. ACI Boats was just awarded a \$3 million

bid with the American Samoa Department of Commerce to build four fishing vessels over the course of 18 months. Construction of the first begins this spring.

ACI Boats has no intention of slowing down.

"The Port Townsend Boat Haven offers a unique and bustling community of builders and craftsmen, we're happy to have found our home here, and look forward to growing with the Port," said Fiore.



Kevin McNally welds together the frame of another new ACI hull. ACI is in the middle of the Port's Boat Haven work yard.



This 32-foot Bristol Bay gillnetter was designed in part by Mike Carr, a commercial fisherman. Two more are being built by ACI.

Did you know?



Port Operations Manager Terry Khile has retired after 34 years at the Port. Khile started working the docks and as part of the Yard crew in 1988, two years after graduating from PTHS. He's worked for eight Port directors and became Operations Manager in 2018.



New Operations Manager Chris Sparks has led the Port's Maintenance Department since 2018. As part of a Port reorganization, he now leads both the Maintenance and Yard crews. Before he was a Home Depot manager, built houses and worked in the marine trades.



Kristian Ferrero is the Port's new Harbormaster, in charge of moorage at all Port marinas and of scheduling haulouts at Boat Haven. He's done many jobs at the Port, including as a hoist operator since starting in 2014.



New Environmental Specialist Kimberlie Webber joined the Port last month. To the job she brings her field work on salmon restoration and a degree (almost completed) in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences from Oregon State University.

Dave's Mobile Welding is a family fabrication business

Dave Fletcher is used to being called on to help with metal fabrication work by business neighbors at the Port of Port Townsend. That's just the way it is at the Port, he said.

"Essentially the Port is like one big shipwright's family," said the straight-forward 44-year old. "It's a bunch of people who often collaborate to get a good outcome."

Aside from his own, he works on projects with outfits like ACI Boats, Galmukoff Marine and other individual shipwrights.

His wife of 22 years and also the office manager, Carney MickHager, said the frequent partnerships are a bonus for boat owners who come to the Port for work.

"It benefits the customers," she said. "People who get hauled out want to get back in as quickly as possible."

The combination of Dave's fabrication skills and the fact that he is an AWS-certified and ABS-qualified welder has also brought non-marine jobs to his 4,800-square-foot shop, Dave's Mobile Welding, at the Port of Port Townsend's Boat Haven. He has a long list of outside customers, including a power company in Alaska that needed custom components, repairs for the Navy, Kitsap Transit and local companies like Seton Construction and Goodman Sanitation.

Dave estimated that about half his time is spent on commercial vessels and other marine refits, and the other half on outside work.

Oh, and by the way, he has been a commercial fisherman for 20-plus years. He still goes to Bristol Bay Alaska now and again. Both his father and his grandfather did the same before him.

Dave and Carney graduated from Port Townsend High School, five years apart. They take exceptional pride in the fact that the business is family-owned in the full sense of the word. Frank Fletcher of Chimacum, a 46-year commercial fisherman and Dave's father, is a silent partner in the business.

Their daughter, Ava, an eighth-grader, is a gifted artist with a love for math, they said. Who knows? Maybe someday she'll contribute some engineered drawings.

"Understanding engineered drawings is a key skill for a fabricator," said Dave. "It's important, for our customers, that I find any issues before I start building." And Carney said to Dave, "Good thing you love the math!"

Dave got his start in fabrication by doing what he had to do to keep his family's commercial fishing boat going to Bristol Bay, Alaska. His most recent boat, a gill netter, was the 32-foot "Enerzizer."

"When I realized it was super expensive to have people doing that work, I did it myself," he said. Before long other people were bringing their boats to him as well.

In 2003 his talents got him hired on at Steelhead Marine of Port Townsend where he worked for six years. That was followed by work with Craftsman United for another five years, which did big metal hulls, often for the U.S. Navy.

In 2018, according to Carney, the couple decided to start their own business from their garage, thinking they'd mostly do mobile welding. But projects started filling the garage. "Quickly, we realized that was not going to work," Carney said. They moved into their current building next to

Sunrise Coffee in late 2018.

The work is extremely varied. In the shop, they have a half-finished 53-foot quad-axle boat trailer waiting for axle parts. They are repairing a commercial boat stored on the hard just outside the shop. And there's always walk-in customers with smaller repairs or to purchase metal.

Pre-pandemic, there were four welders at the shop. Now there's two – Dave and Michael.

"We want to hire," said Dave. "It's hard to find people who are qualified." They're swamped with work right now, and it's "one day at a time" to get done what they can. Still, as Carney said, "we're grateful for the work. It took all of last year to get back to a strong level of business."

Said Dave: "When times get tough, I get tougher. You've got to keep working."



Dave Fletcher and Carney MickHager moved their family business from their garage to the Port in 2018.



Dave Fletcher measures for a piece needed for this fishing boat's keel. The Port, he said, "is like one big shipwright's family" with lots of collaboration between the marine trades.

From Commissioner Petranek: Boat Yard boats to look for

Here are just a few of the vessels being worked on at the Port of Port Townsend Boat Yard by either owners, the marine trades or both:

F/V Barbara B, 56 ft., 1962, wood, and the **F/V Voyager**, 75 ft., 1945, wood. Both are owned by the Greg Veitenhans family of Marrowstone Island. Together with sons Joseph and Henry, this is a fifth-generation fishing family. On their vessels they are doing basic maintenance, extending the boom and replacing planks.

F/V Trask, 70 ft., 1940s, wood, a gillnet tender from Seward, Alaska. It is getting new bulwarks, sponsons, sheer strake and covering boards.

F/V Kariel, approximately 70 ft., a steel hulled longliner with cod pots, from Sitka. Five shipwrights sanded and painted the bottom in a day. Major work included extending the boat length 10 feet.

F/V St. John II, 60 ft., 1940s, wood, a longliner from Seattle. She's getting bearings and shaft work. She's hauled out for a month every year, where she is painted. This year she's also getting new seams and calking, four new planks, reframing and repowering.

F/V Martha, wood, a seiner from Ketchikan. For the past 10 years, a shipwright works on it during winter and fishes it during the summer. Other shipwrights are rebuilding the work deck, hatch, hatch combing and the break beam under house.

Others: Among other boats in the yard or coming soon: **F/V Dove**, a wooden troller from Westport. **F/V Sydney Jane**, an aluminum gillnetter from Port Townsend. **F/V Roedda**, a wooden seiner from Petersburg, Alaska. **F/V Marilyn J.**, a steel seiner and longliner, from Bellingham.



The Port welcomed a brand new 75-ton Travelift from Kendrick Equipment on Feb. 8. It took a couple days to bolt it together before the Port's Yard crew started hauling boats by the end of the week.



Permits and funding are lining up for the replacement of the old jetty that guards the mouth of the Point Hudson Marina, shown here during a January storm. Port officials are hoping to get the work started in the fall of 2022.

Eron Berg column

[» Continued from page 2](#)
are all interested and eager to hear from the community, via emails, letters, calls, walkabouts in the yard and through public comments at Commission meetings. Contact information and how to join Port Commission meetings is on Page 3 of this Report. If you have questions, comments or want to visit with me, my cell phone number is (360) 316-6013. We won't succeed without your help and engagement!

What the Port manages



Point Hudson Marina

An intimate marina surrounded by historic buildings, with 50 slips and 800 feet of linear dock. Also an RV park with 48 spots. Home of the annual Wooden Boat Festival, a haul out, marine trades, biologists, several restaurants, and a foot-passenger ferry to the San Juans.

Boat Haven

Center of the marine trades in Port Townsend and the region's largest marina, home to 475 vessels. Fuel, showers, restroom, pump-out. Over 400 skilled marine trades workers employed by 60 businesses. Acres of upland storage used both by the pros and do-it-yourselfers. Three lifts carry boats up to 300 tons. Dual boat ramps.

Port Administration

Port staff can help with billing questions, and with public engagement in the public decision-making by the elected Port of Port Townsend Commission.
www.portofpt.com

Jefferson Co. International Airport

Featuring a 3,000-foot runway, together with on-call Customs, full aircraft services, fuel, the renowned PT Aero Museum, and the Spruce Goose Cafe. More than 140 aircraft are home-based here.

Boat Launches

The Port operates four rural boat launches. They are at Discovery Bay (Gardiner Beach Road), Port Hadlock (Lower Hadlock Road), Mats Mats Bay near Port Ludlow (Verner Avenue) and Quilcene (Linger Longer Road). There are also dual launches at the Port Townsend Boat Haven.

Quilcene Marina

The Herb Beck Marina in Quilcene offers 50 slips, and offers services such as pump out, showers and restrooms. Nearby is Coast Seafoods, operating mostly on Port land.

Look for the Spring Newsletter in April 2022

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