

One Rack at a Time

New boat storage facility helps bolster marine industry growth in Northern Michigan.

BY ELIZABETH ALTICK

Generations of the Bobb family have enjoyed cruising the waters of northern Michigan since 1949. Now it's time for them to give back to the small town of Cheboygan, Michigan, by contributing to the vitality of its boating community.

Brian Bobb saw a need for boat storage that is both relatively inexpensive and convenient, so the family purchased an existing facility. Built in 2005, it fell victim to the harsh economic climate in 2007.

"We envision great opportunities for the 35,000-square-foot Cheboygan Village Marina," Bobb says. "We believe our long-term investment will not only benefit the city, but also — and most importantly — the northern Michigan boating industry."

Experiencing a resurgence

Bobb had strategic reasons for choosing Cheboygan. "Over the past 15 to 20 years, the northwest part of Michigan has experienced significant development, but it seems as though that has slowed in recent years," he explains. "Cheboygan, on the other hand, has had consistent growth over the past few years and is working diligently as a community to continue development by taking advantage of its natural resources to further its position as a premier boating destination in northern Michigan."

Why did he choose this particular location in town? "It's a beautiful facility on Main Street, in the heart of downtown Cheboygan. Oddly enough, despite its size, it does not seem out of place," he maintains.

"Its location on the river also is a benefit," Bobb continues. "It's just north of the Cheboygan locks, so boaters have direct access to Lake Huron or the Straits. This avoids the inconvenience of having to

go through locks, whether heading out to the lake or coming back in."

Come one, come all

The property, which opens April 15 for summer in/out service, has 361 feet of frontage on the Cheboygan River, with 14 seawall slips with shore power.

"We'll provide a slip for the season, for transient boaters, or those that want to dock for an hour or two while they visit a local restaurant or take a walk through town," Bobb says.

Bobb is providing storage service with a difference. Not only is the storage facility heated to eliminate the need for costly boat winterization, but valet in-out service also is provided. By calling ahead, boats will be placed in the water, ready to go. Upon return, the boats will be hauled out, cleaned up and placed back on the racks.

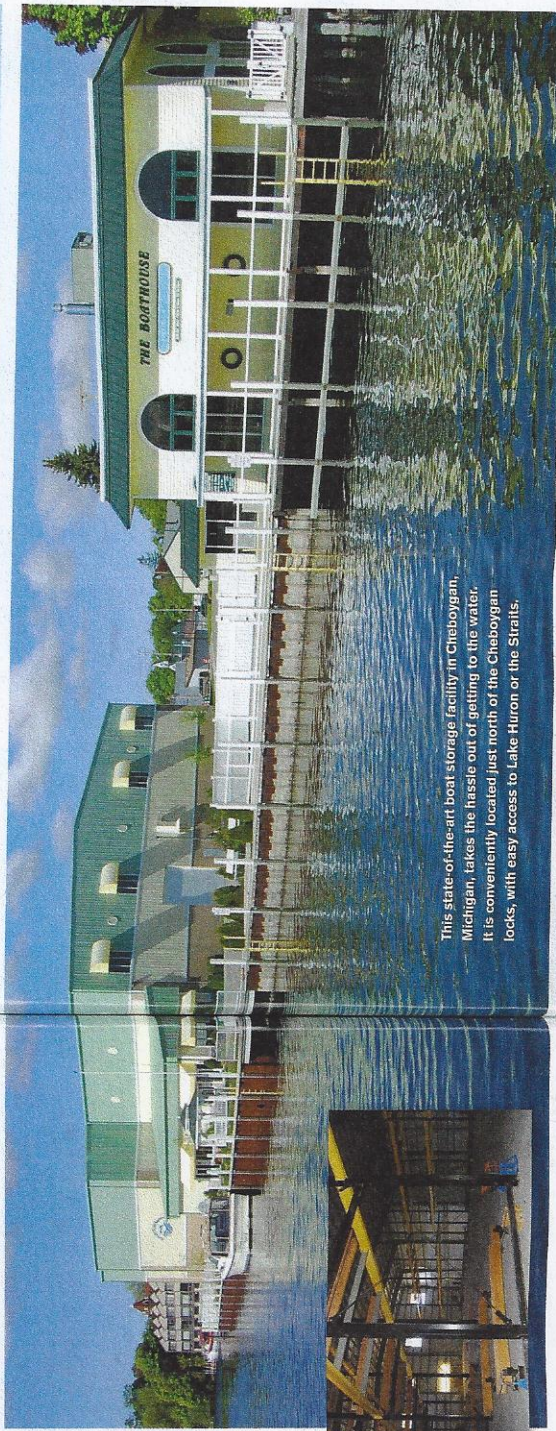
"To our family there's nothing better than being up north and on the water, so when the marina opportunity came about it seemed like a natural fit," Bobb maintains. "That's not to say a good deal of due diligence didn't go into evaluating the industry; however, we did consider that since we're local boaters ourselves, we have our own ideas and expectations about customer service and knowledge of the storage business."

"We were able to validate this opportunity as a viable long-term investment for us...not to mention that we feel we can bring something great to the Cheboygan boating community."

To learn more, visit cheboyganvillagemarina.com.

Advantages of Drystack

- No need for mooring covers and repetitive covering and uncovering of the boat with each use
- Protection from insects, birds, rodents and other nuisances
- Prevent bottom fouling and save on the high cost of maintaining bottom paint
- Flexible scheduling — no last in/first out or first in/last out scenarios, forced launches, or waiting times typically imposed by some marinas
- Keep hull, through-hulls and bilge dry
- Preserve useful life of compressors, pumps and batteries
- Prevent dockside galvanic corrosion from adjacent, improperly grounded vessels
- Protection from damage caused by extreme wind, hail, snow and other inclement weather
- Protection against dock, fender and line damage caused by wind, waves and wake
- Equipment may be left unstowed and unsecured
- Save on truck, trailer and transport costs, as well as associated fuel, insurance, registration and launch fees
- Save on commissioning and decommissioning costs associated with winterization
- Easy maintenance — save on haul-out costs, since the boat is already out of the water
- Protection from UV damage



This state-of-the-art boat storage facility in Cheboygan, Michigan, takes the hassle out of getting to the water. It is conveniently located just north of the Cheboygan locks, with easy access to Lake Huron or the Straits.