

Belle Maer in Winter... Not a Creature was Stirring, Not Even a – Deer?

We know it sounds crazy, but when our Belle Maer customers take their boats out of the water in the fall and head inland for other pursuits, a whole new community takes up residence at the marina. Birds and animals rarely (if ever) seen during boating season are often spotted roaming and foraging around Belle Maer's 60 acres - their tracks in the snow offer proof, but marina staffers are eyewitnesses to this invasion of mostly-friendly creatures.

This brings to mind a couple of lines from a familiar holiday poem:

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter, I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.

Well, nothing to worry about. Just a fox and a deer, a muskrat and a snowshoe hare, a red tail hawk and a raccoon - and most will be gone by the first spring bloom!

All of us at Belle Maer wish you a most joyous and prosperous Holiday Season.

Editor's Note: Photos shown are representative of wildlife seen at the marina

Belle Maer Gears Up for New Season, Now Accepts Credit Card Payments

Now that launch is only about 90 days away, many of us are looking forward to another season at Belle Maer. And, of course, applications for summer slips and/or racks are due into the marina office by January 15th.

You may have already heard that the marina has made arrangements to accept payments using Visa® and MasterCard®. To cover processing fees associated with the credit card program, it was necessary to raise 2009 rates approximately 2.5% over 2008 pricing.

However, tenants who wish to pay for dockage by cash or check as in the past will receive an approximate 2.5% cash discount. The increase, net of credit card processing fees, is a minimal increase of \$30 to \$60 over the 2008 six-month rate. Customers will still be able to take advantage of our three-installment payment schedule regardless of payment method. In addition, they have the option of making some payments by cash and others using their credit card.



Winter Hits Hard and Early Causing Lake Levels to Rise

Most of us know first hand that even though the calendar did not formally declare it, winter hit early - and it hit hard.

We've endured frequent early snow storms and cold weather, interspersed with warm fronts and rain - then back to the deep freeze again. Snow and more snow, with more predicted.

All of this may cause some inconvenience and discomfort in the short term, but we should be rewarded with higher lake levels at spring launch.

According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Lake St. Clair is up 7 inches higher than year ago levels, and slightly higher than the previous month - a time when lake levels are usually in a seasonal decline. And if the trend of higher than average precipitation and cold weather continues, evaporation of the Great Lakes will be minimal, with higher levels in the months ahead. The following is excerpted from Dec. 12 USACE Lake Levels Report:

	SUPERIOR	MICH-HURON	ST. CLAIR	ERIE	ONTARIO
Expected water level for December 12, 2008, in feet	601.0	577.4	573.4	570.9	244.5
Chart datum, in feet	601.1	577.5	572.3	569.2	243.3
Difference from Chart Datum, in inches	-1	-1	+13	+20	+15
Difference from November 12, 2008, in inches*	-4	0	+1	+3	+1
Difference from December 12, 2007, in inches*	+3	+13	+7	+6	+9
Difference from long-term monthly average level for December, in inches	-9	-14	-6	+1	0
Difference from highest recorded monthly mean level for December, in inches	-24 (1985)	-50 (1986)	-41 (1986)	-35 (1986)	-26 (1945)
Difference from lowest recorded monthly mean level for December, in inches	+11 (1925)	+15 (1964)	+20 (1964)	+32 (1934)	+31 (1934)
Projected change in levels By January 12, 2008, in inches	-3	-1	-1	0	0

All data shown in this summary are referenced to IGLD 1985
*values for specific day are based on 3-day daily average around specified date

Belle Maer 2009 Sponsorship Program

Many of you have boating friends who keep their boats at other marinas; why not suggest they check out Belle Maer before they make their 2009 slip deposit?

For 2009, the marina is offering a total of \$750 in credits for each sponsored new boater who leases a Belle Maer Harbor rental slip for the 2009 season. (This offer excludes the lease for rack storage or the lease of condominium wells that are not owned by Belle Maer Harbor.) A \$500 credit will be given to the sponsoring customer and a \$250 credit to the new boater. If the sponsor wishes to give the sponsored boater all or part of their \$500 credit, the marina will allocate the credit according to your wishes.

Belle Maer Harbor offers so much value for your boating dollar, including drive-up slips, free cable TV and WiFi service, security service at our gated land entrance, buoyed water entrance, landscaped grounds, convenient guest parking, children's playscape, tennis court, basketball court, volleyball court, heated pool, two bathhouses, laundry facilities, wide fairways and July 4th fireworks. It is also anticipated that Harrison Township will continue with its free shuttle service to the area restaurants and events.

Belle Maer Harbor also offers the best amenities and location:

Direct access into Anchor Bay without having to navigate the congested Clinton River

Belle Maer is located in the clean waters of Anchor Bay north of the Clinton River

Anchor Bay is home to all of the popular boating destinations such as the islands, shipping channels and Metro Beach. The close proximity of these locations allows our boaters to use their boats with a much lower fuel usage.

BMH is a family marina in a park-like setting with all the amenities necessary to enjoy your boat as a "floating cottage"

After calling a friend and asking them to consider Belle Maer Harbor, simply call the marina office at (586) 465-4534 and register their name as your contact. The office will follow up by mailing them a brochure and information packet if their address is provided.

Belle Maer Recertified as 'Clean Marina'

In December 2005, Belle Maer Harbor and Walstrom Marine (Harbor Springs) earned the Clean Marina certification for a three-year period. Both been re-certified as Clean Marinas by the Clean Marina Program Committee and recognized for this achievement at Michigan Boating Industries Association Recreational Boating Education Conference in Bay City. The re-certification is for a five-year period. Congratulations to Walstrom Marine and Belle Maer Harbor."

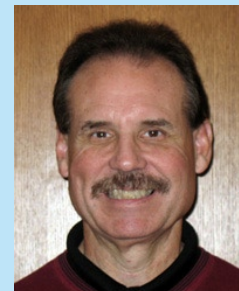
Eric Foster Elected Chairman of MBIA

Eric Foster, General Partner at BMH, was elected chairman of the Michigan Boating Industries Association for 2009. The election was held December 4th at the Michigan Boating Industries Association Recreational Boating Education Conference in Bay City. Congratulations, Eric!

The MBIA is a non-profit trade association dedicated to the promotion, protection and advancement of the recreational boating industry in Michigan. The MBIA currently represents nearly 400 marine businesses in Michigan.



(l-r) Eric Foster, Belle Maer; MI Sea Grant Program Director Chuck Pistis; MBIA Chairman John Hatfield; and Ward Walstrom Jr., Walstrom Marine



Eric Foster, General Partner at BMH

Customs and Border Patrol Office Explains Pleasure Boat Reporting Requirements in Detroit

With winter upon us and our boats shored, it's a good time to study up on and plan for safe, smooth - and legal - travel to and from Canada, if that's where our pleasure boats are headed this season.

With many changes in procedures and requirements, the Customs and Border Protection office has issued a reminder to boaters about reporting requirements and procedures for small pleasure vessels, arriving in the United States from a foreign port or place, namely Canada:

When Is Reporting Required?

Boaters must report their arrival to U.S. Customs and Border Protection if having been engaged in any of the below activities:

After having been at any foreign port or place including tying up at a foreign dock or:

After having had contact with any hovering vessel

The simple activity of fishing in Canadian waters will not require reporting arrival to Customs and Border Protection.

How Do You Report?

There are three ways to report your arrival:

The first is the Master/Captain of the vessel reports the arrival by telephoning CBP

Detroit Area – (313) 393-3949

Port Huron Area – (810) 985-9541 ext. 235

Sault Ste. Marie Area – (906) 632-7221 / 2631

The second is participation in the Canadian Border Boat Landing Permit system (I-68)

The I-68 permit allows boaters to enter the United States from Canada for recreational purposes with only the need to report to CBP by telephoning in their arrival and is a yearly permit.

The third is participation in the NEXUS program

NEXUS Marine program is a joint Canada-U.S. initiative that is valid for five years and satisfies the boat operator's legal requirement to report to a port-of-entry for face-to-face inspection and allows to phone in their arrival.

Details about the I-68 and NEXUS programs can be found at the [Pleasure Boat Requirements by Location website](#).

What Can Happen If I Do Not Report?

Failure to report can result in civil penalties as defined in Title 19, United States Code, Section 1436 to include a penalty of \$5,000 for the first violation and \$10,000 for each subsequent violation with the conveyance subject to seizure and forfeiture. In addition to being liable for a civil penalty, any master who intentionally commits a violation under subsection (a) of this section upon conviction is liable for a fine of not more than \$2,000 or imprisonment for one year or both.

Customs and Border Protection encourages boaters to have a safe and enjoyable season by knowing the rules for crossing the border.

Please report any suspicious activities observed to 1-800-BE-ALERT (1-800-232-5378) or the after hours toll free number 1-800-562-5943.

Editor's Note: After personal experience, and several cases heard through the local marine grapevine, it is highly recommended that you follow these procedures if/when you travel to/from Canada. The optimum way to ensure compliance is to obtain your NEXUS pass, which may seem like a hassle to get on at the outset - but will facilitate travel for a five-year period.

51st Annual Detroit Boat Show Runs February 14-22 at Cobo Hall

The Detroit Boat Show is gearing up to celebrate 51 years of boating with its 2009 event. Boats of all types and sizes for fishing, cruising, wakeboarding, skiing, and other types of water fun will be on display for 9-days at Cobo Center. More than 200 exhibitors will bring in nearly 1000 boats from 10- 50 feet in length - ready to be sold at the best prices of the year. In addition to boats, you can get updates on the latest products and services available to boaters, purchase some new accessories or electronics, start planning next year's excursions, attend fishing seminars, and meet up with your fellow boat-buddies to enjoy a great day reminiscing about last year's boating excursions.

Miss GEICO, the world's fastest offshore racing boat, to appear in Detroit at the 2009 Detroit Boat Show.

This legendary boat is powered with the same turbine engines that flew missions in the first Gulf War and is capable of reaching speeds of more than 185 miles per hour. At 40 feet and weighing 10,000 pounds, this MTI turbine race boat is run by a crew of six, including Driver Marc Granet. The boat has set two world records and participated in dozens of races around the world.

Bow Wow! - Dogs Need Weekends Too

Opening weekend will host an Adopt a Dog Day. Some great boating companions will be at the show, and there may be an opportunity to take one home. Also featured will be our great photo board of boating pets on display at the show. Bring your boating pet photo (not your pet) and you could win a prize.

Dogs love the water and boating.

Boats of Bond - James Bond

Did you see the new Bond movie, Quantum of Solace? After taking that wild ride, be sure to come see the Boats of Bond at the Detroit Boat Show.

Bond boats and other Bond movie memorabilia will be featured along with a Bond Movie Trivia Contest and other fun Bond promotions.

Don't miss the fun!

Casting Demos at the Hawg Tank!

Back by popular demand, the Hawg Tank will feature some of Michigan's most enticing game fish. This 45-foot, glass-sided semi trailer filled with water and natural environment offers a unique opportunity to see biting and fighting game fish in action.

The Boat Show also plans an exciting line-up of fishing seminars from top named pros from around the country.

Relax at the Beach Bar!

Take a break at this fun place to have a drink and talk about the show. Make it your meeting spot to catch up with friends and family, people watch or just sit and dream about summer boating.



Holiday 2008

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RAIL JAM!!!!

Don't miss the thrills and exciting wakeboard action with great wakeboarders

This featured attraction will be bringing in some of the best wakeboarders and wakeskaters in the country to ride the rail. Rail Jam features two 40 foot pools separated by a long metal rail that the wakeboarders ride across while being pulled by a high-powered winch from one pool to the other. Wakeboarding and wakeskating are the cutting edge, extreme sports segments of boating – and are growing in popularity among thrill seeking outdoor enthusiasts.

Saturdays, Monday and Wednesday: 1:30, 4:30 & 7:00;
Sundays: 1:00, 3:00 & 5:00; Tues, Thurs, Friday: 5:30 & 7:30.

Accessories, Service, Shopping

In addition to boats you will be in the middle of the ultimate one-stop-shopping experience for boating gear, accessories, electronics, jewelry, canvas, artwork, shoe, clothing, bumpers, fishing equipment and much more.

Laugh and Learn with Capt'n Willie the Great Lakes Pirate

Back by popular demand is the famous Capt'n Willie and his Pirate Island. His lively edutainment shows, filled with Great Lakes trivia, musical jigs and a whole lot of "arggh, mateys!," inspires laughter and learning. Capt'n Willie will be performing: Saturdays: 12:30 pm, 2:30 pm, 4:30 pm, 7:30 pm; Sundays: 12:30 pm, 2:30 pm, 4:30 pm; Monday (President's Day): 12:30 pm, 2:30 pm, 4:30 pm, 7:00 pm; Tuesday - Friday: 6pm, 7:30 pm.

Kids Love The Boat Show!

Kids love to see, touch and climb aboard boats of all kinds, types, and sizes. Kids can climb onboard a personal watercraft that sits right on the show floor or scale the heights to the top of a cruiser for a birds eye view of the whole show. Then hop on the swivel chair of a glitzy new bass boat or run from front to back in a spacious deckboat filled with rows and rows of seats.

Kids Boating Clinic

Kids also have a special section all their own, dedicated to learning and fun - the Boating Kids Clinic. Filled with hands-on boating crafts and skills learning, kids are sure to have fun while they learn how to tie a rope to a cleat, learn how to keep our waters clean, and learn how to put on a personal floatation device and much, much more.

The Kids' Favorite Inflatable Village is one of the most popular exhibits in the show for kids and for parents who need a break. The inflatable village features a number of kid-friendly giant inflated toys for climbing, jumping, and racing. Admission will be charged.

PLUS... Kids 12 and under get into the show Free with an adult!



ANTIQUe AND CLASSIC BOATS

Experience a walk down memory lane and see how far boating has come. The Michigan Chapter of the Antique and Classic Boat Society (ACBS) will feature special antique and classic boats on display. Watch as they restore a project boat, putting on decks and sides for a transformation right before your eyes.

The Detroit Boat Show runs Feb. 14 – 22 at Cobo Hall in Detroit.

Hours are Sundays, 11am - 6pm,
Saturday, Monday & Wednesday, 11am - 9pm,
Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 3pm - 9pm.

Free Tickets Available at Skipper Buds - Skipper Buds has free Boat Show tickets available while supplies last. These tickets can be picked up from Skipper Buds showroom or from the Belle Maer Harbor office.

Skipper Buds Brokerage is Like Listing Your Boat at 20 Locations, Boats Shows

If you are considering listing your boat for sale through a brokerage company, Tom Walker, Skipper Buds sales manager, urges you to consider listing it at their Harrison Township location at Belle Maer.

The reason, Tom explains, is that Skipper Buds has 20 locations throughout the Great Lakes - six in Michigan alone - with a ready staff of seasoned salespeople all standing at the ready to help sell your boat. In addition, the company participates in major boat shows in Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, Cleveland and Miami, where your boat will be shown as a company brokerage listing. And that doesn't even include the world-wide exposure offered via the web at skipperbuds.com

Tom is also inviting Belle Maer tenants to stop by their showroom to learn more about the vessels that are in stock or coming soon. Included in their current inventory are a 2006 38' Carver Super Sport, and a 2005 36' Carver Motor Yacht with less than 100 hours. Skipper Buds also plans a strong showing of new and current Four Winns models at the Detroit Boat Show February 14-22, and Tom is invites one and all to drop by and say hello.

Fall and Winter Office Hours

Monday – Friday
8:30am – 5:00pm

Saturday
10:00am – 4:00pm

The office will be closed on Saturdays during November and December