



Two Recreational Boating Industry Leaders Inducted into NMMA Hall of Fame

Robert Menne, Jr. of Premier Marine and Victor Porter of Formula Boats to be honored with NMMA's highest award for achievement at IBEX

Chicago, Ill. – Sept. 20, 2016 – The [National Marine Manufacturers Association's](#) (NMMA) will present two industry leaders this year with its highest honor, the NMMA Hall of Fame. Robert (Bob) Menne, Jr., CEO, Premier Marine, and Victor (Vic) Porter, Chairman, Formula Boats, will be recognized for their career achievements and contributions to the industry during the 26th [International BoatBuilders' Exhibition & Conference \(IBEX\)](#) at the show's annual Industry Breakfast on Tuesday, October 4 from 7:30-9:30am at the new location, Tampa Waterside Marriott Hotel.

"We're proud to celebrate Bob Menne and Vic Porter, two pioneers in the recreational boating industry, who have paved the way for its future with unwavering dedication, innovation and passion for boating, their communities and families," said NMMA President Thom Dammrich. "Bob's and Vic's legacies will continue as they join the ranks of [NMMA Hall of Fame inductees](#) including industry founders Christopher Smith, Charles Chapman, Alan Freedman and Ole Evinrude and such contemporaries as Dusty McCoy, Bob Long, Robert Deputy and Pack St. Clair."

The NMMA Hall of Fame was established in 1988 and recognizes individuals who have made, or continue to generate, substantial and lasting contributions toward the advancement of the marine industry. It honors individuals whose names and deeds are synonymous with the pursuit of quality, innovation, and perfection within their respective spheres of expertise.

Bob Menne, Jr. got his start in the marine industry in 1972, when he and his wife Betty founded Diversified Products., Inc., also known as DPI. In 1980, Bob became a partner in Forester Boats, which produced small fiberglass runabouts. Under Bob's leadership the company expanded its product line to include aluminum boats and pontoons. Bob and his family sold DPI in 1989, and in 1992, Bob and Betty set out to start a pontoon company with a mission to offer a premium pontoon with amenities not offered elsewhere. That company, Premier Marine, introduced innovations and options that changed the perception of pontoons for the public. Among the industry firsts: rotation molded furniture, eliminating all wood except flooring, the patented J-Clip fastening system, hinge mechanisms, and top frame designs. The seagrass flooring that is now the industry standard was the work of Bob and his team. Premier Marine also offered the first full-size cuddy on a pontoon, and 12-ft. wide models equipped with three 300-hp motors.

Throughout his career, Bob gave back to the marine industry, offering guidance to the Boat Manufacturers Division (BMD) of the NMMA and the NMMA Board. He was active with the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) and an early member of the Take Me Fishing organization. He also advised the Department of Natural Resources on boat ramp needs and advocated for the industry on Capitol Hill.

Vic Porter began his career in the marine industry in 1957 as a salesman. Dissatisfied with the quality of the product he represented, he decided that he could build a better boat. In 1958, he borrowed \$3,000 and founded Duo Marine in Decatur, Indiana. The company's first model boat was a 14-ft. twin outboard powered catamaran, which was followed by several runabout craft, tri-hulls, and a tunnel-hulled craft.

As Vic grew the company, he acquired the Aqua Swan aluminum boat and Crownline runabout brands and moved production of both lines to Decatur. Vic sold Duo Marine to Bangor Punta in 1967 and in 1970 founded Signa Corp., which manufactured both sterndrive and outboard powered tri-hull boats. Vic sold Signa to Fuqua Industries, the parent company of Thunderbird/Formula boats in 1973, and served as President of Thunderbird/Formula/Signa, ultimately purchasing the three lines in 1976. Vic steered the company and Formula brand to a position of world-renowned recognition for design and quality, and in 1989, as family members stepped into executive roles, Vic settled in as Chairman, continuing to advocate the Formula legacy of innovation, quality and performance.

During his career, Vic served the recreational boating industry, active in the BIA (Boating Industry Association) when it merged with the NAEBM (National Association of Engine and Boat Manufacturers) to become the NMMA (National Marine Manufacturers Association). Vic was on the boards of both the BIA and NMMA. Vic has also long supported his community that is home to Thunderbird Products, spearheading the development and funding of Decatur's industrial park, serving on the Indiana Central College (now University of Indianapolis) board, the Anthony Wayne Boy Scout Council, Cole Foundation and Adams Memorial Hospital Board. Recognition of his efforts include the Indiana Spirit of Entrepreneurship Award and the Stephen Decatur Award. He was inducted into the Junior Achievement Greater Fort Wayne Business Hall of Fame and was named a Sagamore of the Wabash by Governor Otis Bowen. Thunderbird received the Decatur Chamber of Commerce Large Business of the Year Award in 2000.

To attend the breakfast, buy a ticket by calling 484-751-5135; tickets are also available upon IBEX registration at www.IBEXShow.com and are \$35. Doors will open at 7:00am and the program will begin promptly at 7:30am Tuesday, October 4.

To learn more about past NMMA Hall of Fame inductees, visit the [NMMA Industry Awards page](#).

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About NMMA: The National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) is the leading trade organization for the North American recreational boating industry. NMMA member companies produce more than 80 percent of the boats, engines, trailers, marine accessories and gear used by millions of boaters in North America. The association serves its members and their sales and service networks by improving the business environment for recreational boating including providing domestic and international sales and marketing opportunities, reducing unnecessary government regulation, decreasing the cost of doing business, and helping grow boating participation. As the largest producer of boat and sport shows in the U.S., NMMA connects the recreational boating industry with the boating consumer year-round. Learn more at www.nmma.org and get engaged with us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About IBEX: IBEX is owned and produced by Professional BoatBuilder magazine and the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) and is the marine industry's largest technical trade event. For boat builders, marine industry dealers, aftermarket suppliers and buyers, designers, repairers, surveyors, and boatyard/marine operators, IBEX is the single source for the latest boatbuilding technologies, tools, and materials. For the latest information, visit www.IBEXShow.com.

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