

A ONE-MAN STIMULUS PACKAGE

BY BRIAN LAWSON, HUDSON RIVER CHAPTER

JANUARY WAS A BEAR;

long grinding days, lows near zero, day time highs near 20. And don't forget the wind. I recall a Gauge I wrote about this time last year, the need for a heated shop and how I'd be less depressed in winter. Hah! We've all lost 40-50% of our net worth, a recent business trip was to the Idaho desert (it's winter there too), kids, niece, and friends have been laid off from their jobs, I lost a dear friend in late January...and I'm worried about boats? Yes, I am.

In the middle of February I am actively working on boats (in my unheated shop), making plans and getting materials in order for the rush once the weather turns. Am I worried about the economy and my 401k and that I'd like to retire in a few years? Yes, I am. But I'm not going to let those worries stop me from enjoying one of my greatest pleasures: restoring and operating classic boats. I have developed my own stimulus plan to aid the marine industry. If everyone does something, it could make a difference. Consider the Great Depression, and the number of boat builders that closed their doors as a result.

I have learned that I make better progress when I have more than one project going. Right now I am restoring a 1961 Power Cat 18DC, a 1959 Crosby Ranger, a 1960 Glen-L Missile, and a 1960 Uniroyal dinghy (yeah, it really is rubber!). The Power Cat and the Missile were given to me. The Crosby I "won" on eBay for \$54 and that included an 85 hp Evinrude and a trailer. The dinghy is a friend's boat. What I need to complete these four boats and get the motors ready for summer will help a broad swath of the marine economy. No one is going to get rich, but people will be working and cash will be flowing. And the good news is, the money, for the most part, goes directly to the little guy. It's a pretty good mix of projects that have kept me occupied through this long winter. Some of the boats are pretty rare and worth saving. None of them will be show boats, but all will be ready to give another 40 to 50 years of service when done.

To complete all four projects by summer will require a lot of material and services from a variety of suppliers including resin, cloth, MAT, various filler material, a number of Interlux products, (Bilge Kote, Pre Kote, VC Performance Epoxy, Brightsides and #95 varnish), stain, fasteners of all sorts, 3M 5200, CPES from Smith's, mahogany and mahogany plywood, paint stripper, many boxes of 8-hole 5-inch sanding disks, dozens of foam brushes (Wooster Brush Company), Pettit Hard Racing Bronze, outboard repair parts, and outboard starter and generator servicing.

So here's a quick rundown of the four projects I'm working on, the work to be done on them, and how continuing to work on them will help our economy and most importantly the marine industry.



1960 GLEN-L MISSILE

The Glen-L is plywood on frames with a glassed over bottom. Designed for a Buick V8 Nail-head with a V-drive, I'm converting it to outboard. Briefly, here's what's been done, or what needs to be done on this boat. Remove the old transom and build and install a new transom 2" thick built up from 2 layers of 1/2" plywood (bought it), 1 layer of 5/4 mahogany (bought it) with fiberglass resin and MAT (bought it) between each layer. Bed the transom in 3M 5200 (bought it) and fasten with SiBr fasteners (bought them). Strip all the old paint off (bought 3 to 4 gallons of paste stripper, and new blades for the scrapers). Sand surfaces (bought sanding disks). Sand interior (bought more sanding disks). Remove the existing inboard engine stringers and notch them to lower them to the bottom, and using 2x2" oak blocks bolt in place to the frames (bought 3 1/2" bolts, lock washers and nuts). Repair cracks in seams where fiberglass split (the boat was filled with ice when I brought it home) with cloth tape and resin (buy it). Paint interior bilge with Interlux Bilge Kote (buy it). Fill exterior plywood with finish filler (buy it) and sand (buy paper). Remove delaminated fore deck section and replace with mahogany plywood (buy it). Install 3/4" plywood (buy it) floor over frames and fasten (buy them). Install vinyl flooring (buy it) over the plywood. Build two matched chairs (pilot and co-pilot) from 5/4 mahogany (buy it). Build rear bench seat from 5/4 mahogany (buy it). Stain (buy it) and varnish (buy it) seating. Design and build side covers over frames (still working on what to do here). Paint exterior with Interlux VC Performance Epoxy (buy it). Add color accents to exterior top with Interlux Brightsides (buy it). 1971 Mercury 1350SS repairs are complete. I spent a lot more on this motor repair than I had planned, but as typical, the more it was gotten into, the more it needed. I am now confident it will run well. The engine work was done by a small business specializing in Mercury motor repairs. Purchase Teleflex rack helm. Purchase and outfit hardware, lighting, etc.

1959 CROSBY RANGER

The Ranger is a classic Ab Crosby design employing a balsa wood core that is over 2" thick in places. It has twin molded spray rails, lots of freeboard and a broad beam (86"). The core needed work as a prior owner had drilled a hole through the boat to install a transducer for a depth finder. The sealant eventually hardened and allowed water to get into the balsa core and soften a section of it. The transom is solid as a rock. The bad news is that the hull's gelcoat was heavily checked and it all needed to come off. That's a dirty, ugly job. I cut about three dozen holes in the woven roving inside the boat and poured acetone (bought it)



Restoring the battered economy, one boat at a time. Brian urges all of us to keep the marine industry alive by continuing to take care of our boats. He's certainly doing his part with these four restoration projects.





in to allow better drying of the moisture in the core. Once dry (this took a full year of sitting in the shop occasionally adding acetone) and letting it dry through the summer) I applied four gallons of Cold Penetrating Epoxy Sealer (CPES) (bought it) to the core. When dry, I reinstalled the 36 plugs with resin and then applied a cloth and resin (bought it) patch over each hole. The section of core around the worst of the core where most of the holes were drilled was then over coated with MAT and resin (bought it). The interior of the boat was then painted with Interlux Brightsides Seattle gray (bought it). The boat was then rolled over (no small feat) outdoors, and all of the gelcoat was ground off the boat from the lower spray rail down using an angle grinder and 36-grit disks (bought them). Once

things warm up I will need to do more grinding and cleanup work, then the entire bottom will be glassed with cloth and resin (buy it), and then filled (buy it) and faired smooth (buy more sanding disks). Paint the exterior of the hull with Interlux VC



Performance Epoxy (buy it). Roll the boat back over, and sand (more paper) and finish the top with Interlux Brightsides (buy it). Fabricate a windshield from Plexiglas (buy it). Rebuild front seat with plywood (buy it), foam (buy it) and marine vinyl (buy it). Outfit with twin 1959 Evinrude Larks. The lower units and carburetors were gone through by a one-man shop last year and are ready to go.

1961 POWER CAT 18DC

The 18DC is a rare boat. There are half dozen known to exist, based on the Power Cat website run by Danny Ledger, Ray Ledger's (founder of Power Cat) son. The 18DC is 16-foot long and an amazing 8-foot wide; a true catamaran. Built in Bellflower, California, in 1961, it was a California boat until the mid 1960's when it was severely damaged in a storm. The starboard side was battered with the transom corner split open, the end of the tail fin broken off, and damage along the entire side including several holes, a number of deep vertical gouges, and severe damage to the gunwale. The port side is nearly new looking. The boat has been separated (top and bottom) and the hull rolled. During the fall I performed extensive glass repairs including repairing the split transom with MAT and resin (bought it) and long strand filler (bought it). The

bottoms of both sponsons were rebuilt using long strand filler followed by finish filler (bought it). The through holes were repaired as was much of the damage to the starboard side of the hull using various fillers (bought them). The tail fin was rebuilt using cloth and resin, followed by long strand filler (bought them). I'm now in the finish filler stage. This winter I've been repairing the damage to the gunwale on the top using first a cloth and resin repair (done in the fall) followed by long strand filler (bought LOTS of it). Final shaping and contouring is underway copying the port side with a contour tool (bought one) and checking the starboard side to it. Come spring the hull will be rolled over and the old transom removed. A new transom of two layers of 3/4" plywood (buy it) with MAT and resin (buy it) will be fabricated and installed with lots more MAT and resin (buy it). When done, the hull will be finish sanded (more paper) and then painted with several coats of Interlux VC Performance Epoxy (buy it). The VC epoxy will be wet sanded with various grits of emery paper (buy it) up to about 1200-1400 grit and will look like gelcoat when done. The top will be finish sanded after all repairs are completed and painted with Interlux Brightsides (buy it). Twin 1962 Evinrude Larks are being gone through by a one man shop this winter. Steering, lights, period hardware, etc. (buy them).



1960 UNIROYAL DINGHY

This dinghy was bought as a blank rubber hull, and then outfitted in 1960-61 as a rowing and sailing rig including wood gunwales, keel (it also has a small wooden swing keel), transom braces, stem, mast step and three seats. This past fall I stripped all the wood, sanded it and stained the wood attached to the hull. I am replacing the keel as it was bad, so bought a nice piece of clear 5/4 mahogany for that. This winter I moved the seats and mast step into the basement when I finish sanded them, stained and am in the process of varnishing them. Not a big project, but still requiring about a dozen high quality Wooster foam brushes (bought them), a quart or two of varnish, and some bottom paint for the new keel.

It's been a busy winter on a number of fronts. It will be a busy spring to get all these done and finished out for summer. I'll be placing orders for materials from suppliers in Ohio, Rhode Island, and Washington state that will be providing materials from who knows how many companies from who knows where. I'll be sending money to small motor and electric shops. I believe most of what I'll be buying will be produced here in America (although not a requirement of my stimulus package). I have a lot of supplies and materials to buy. Some of the stuff has been and will be expensive. We are restoring boats after all, and that does take money.

That's my Wintry Mix of projects I've been working on, which to complete this spring will require me to stimulate the economy as best I can. I hope we all can do something to keep our marine industry working. Don't stop taking care of your boat. Paint the bottom, refresh the varnish, have a nagging engine problem worked on, buy something the boat needs, do what you can, and maybe together we can prevent the disaster in boat building and business closures that happened the last time. I'm not an economist, but I know every little bit helps. I also believe that recovery starts at the bottom, with me, and works its way up. I will stay positive, and look ahead to better times. 

