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CONTACT: Kelly Ruff

(239) 860-8615

[KRuff@BoatClubsAmerica.com](mailto:KRuff@BoatClubsAmerica.com)

## **While most marinas are being torn down, Boat Clubs America is building marinas.**

NAPLES, FL (June 13, 2007) – What do you get when you mix a real estate Broker with a General Contractor? Normally, this mix equals a well-known entity called a Land Development Company. **BoatClubsAmerica** has put a new twist into an old formula by adding the component of Marina Operations.

Over the last decade, Ed and Patrick Ruff (Ed is the Broker, Patrick is the General Contractor) have completed the redevelopment of two marina properties located in Bonita Springs and Naples, Florida, and are working on the next two located in Ft. Myers and Ft. Lauderdale. They are a father-and-son business team.

“The reason why most marinas are being torn-down and turned into residential developments or condos, is because the math makes better sense – the profit margin is just better,” said Patrick Ruff, general contractor for **BoatClubsAmerica**. “Often, if someone decides to redevelop a marina property, they fix it up and take out the boat repair and service component in exchange for greater storage income. Most marina owners seek the boat storage income and want to leave the hassle of the repair and service behind. We don’t see it that way. We have a very different business formula,” said Ruff.

The growing scarcity of marinas is great. And growing scarcity of marinas with boat repair facilities is even greater, according to Ruff and Ruff. “We’re not only in a high-risk category of land development, we are swimming against the tide of current thinking and keeping the service and repair component,” said Patrick Ruff.

The father-and-son duo are passionate about boat service and a few other counter-intuitive ideas that have long been held as truths in the marina industry and in basic land development formulas.

“In the past, marinas have either been public municipalities, private yacht clubs or boat yards. We are breaking this mold, too,” explained Patrick Ruff. “It’s actually confusing for the long-time boaters. People do a double-take when I explain how we mix the public and private aspects into one property *and* keep the boatyard open to the general public. This is a new concept in the marina world for most people.

The permitting and development of new marina facilities is complex due to strict environmental regulations, ever-changing building codes and public opinion. “We’ve got a decade of understanding this niche market, and we know without a doubt that *service* is our number-one amenity,” said Ed Ruff. “The resort-style pools, clubhouse facilities and large new docks and dry storage might bring people into our sales office, but the service component is the final reason why they pick one of our marinas, instead of a competitor who is selling something down the street.”

“When **Ft Myers BoatClub** is complete, some people will boat to the property because they own a slip, some will come because they are renting a slip from a current owner, others will visit the Service Center just once a year and others will visit the general public restaurant by boat or car on a regular basis. Plus, many owners will be using the private pool and clubhouse facilities,” explained Patrick Ruff. “This is the largest marina in Lee County (26 acres), so there is enough room for everyone and every kind of marina activity. What we bring to the table is imagination and experience that has given us a different perspective and the willingness to invent something brand new.”

MarineMax is staying on the property formerly known as Deep Lagoon Marina and has signed a 20-year lease. MariTech, a Ft. Lauderdale-based boat service company has just moved onto the property to handle repair and parts. “Half of the property is under construction right now, while the other half of the property is still operating as is, explained Ruff (the general contractor). “It will take about three years to complete the construction and we are about eight-months into the redevelopment. Even while under construction, we are keeping the service and repair center completely open to the general public – that’s how dedicated we are to this concept.”

Ruff and Ruff are NASCAR fans. When they describe the Boat Repair Center slated for **Ft Myers BoatClub**, you would think they are talking about a facility for a race team. “We will have over 40,000 square feet dedicated to repair and service on the property,” explained Ed Ruff. “There will be six ‘clean space work bays’ that can hold a boat up to about 70 feet, and the brand new 75-ton brand new travel lift will be able to pick up the largest boats in the area. We’ve already taken delivery of our new travel lift. It is an amazing piece of equipment!”

The marina property formerly known as Deep Lagoon Marina sits in the heart of a growing area of Ft. Myers called “South Ft. Myers,” on the Caloosahatchee River. It’s the largest marina (26 acres) in a region that boasts over 80,000 registered boat owners. This summer, **BoatClubsAmerica** will complete their first phase of construction at **Ft Myers BoatClub** with 90 new wet slips.

The redevelopment plans on the Ft. Myers property also includes a billiard room, multiple plasma HDTVs, locker rooms and laundry facilities, and a private banquet room with a catering kitchen. There will be a fully equipped business center and conference room with teleconferencing capability. And, a Fuel Dock, pump-out station, Ships Store, wet slips for guest launching and two fish cleaning stations.

Office space on site has been donated to the Coast Guard Auxiliary and TV kiosks will be installed throughout the property to continuously report current weather and tide forecasts, plus the property will be equipped with a lightning detection system. Since the property is so large, golf cart service from the parking lot to the launch areas will be provided. Several *guest phones* will also be located around the marina that ring directly into the Harbor Master’s operation center.

Natural preserve areas have been kept and open spaces were a consideration in the design of **Ft Myers BoatClub**, resulting in boardwalks and an Osprey nest. Plus, a full-time employee will be dedicated to environmental education and compliance.

“We’re not just land developers. We’re not just marina operators. We’re both,” said Patrick Ruff.

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**Ft Myers BoatClub** is located at 14030 McGregor Blvd. in South Ft Myers, Florida. The sales center is open seven days a week. The property is currently under construction, yet is still open for repair, haul & launch and storage during the construction process. Visit [www.BoatClubsAmerica.com](http://www.BoatClubsAmerica.com).