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57th Vancouver International Boat Show Concludes With Strong Attendance

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Vancouver, B.C. – A cold weather front that consumed the Lower Mainland during the past week and brought a rare snowfall to the downtown core on Sunday, didn't deter boating enthusiasts from attending the Vancouver International Boat Show this year.

Western Canada's largest boat show's attendance numbers at both the indoor show at BC Place and the Floating Show at Granville Island are reported at 28,764 for the 2019 show, compared to 28,739 the previous year.

"Despite unprecedented winds, weekend snowfall and challenging road conditions, the crowd turnout was favorable, and BC's recreational marine dealers and service providers are cautiously optimistic in advance of the fast approaching boating season," said Show Manager Eric Nicholl. "By most accounts, exhibitors were greeted by serious buyers, and initial feedback from key markets throughout the Province suggests this year will be relatively stable."

Snowfall on the Sunday forced the closure of the Floating Show mid-afternoon, and likely contributed to reduced attendance numbers comparable to previous Sunday counts; this year's Sunday attendance was down 15% compared to 2018, while attendance on the Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday were all up comparative to last year.

On the Saturday, sustained Arctic outflow winds in Howe Sound damaged docks and boats in West Vancouver's Horseshoe Bay, with nearly a dozen boats breaking loose from Sewell's marina and washing ashore. BC Ferries sailings were cancelled for a large part of the day making it a challenge for Island-based residents to make their trip to the show.

People travelling from the Interior regions of the BC, specifically from the Okanagan / Kamloops / Merrit area were faced with treacherous driving conditions as mountain passes were under heavy snowfall warnings and advisories.

Weather was a significant factor on overall attendance as nearly 1,000 pre-purchased electronic tickets were not redeemed.

Guests in attendance expressed interest in a wide range of products, including canoes/kayaks/paddleboards, bowriders and fishing boats, ski & wakeboard boats; and even the luxury yachts and cruiser segments.

“The 2019 Boat Show has been positive and we’ve seen sales through a large cross-section of models,” said “Bob Papajohn, President of M&P Mercury Sales. “But, perhaps the most promising aspect of the event has been the enthusiasm of people who are new to boating and are understanding the affordability and ease in which they can get into this activity.”

Yamaha Motors Canada had a similar, positive experience at the Vancouver Boat, according to District Manager of Sales, Steve Cyr, who suggested, “Show attendance and the quality of the crowd has been good.”

Jason Burks of Sundance Yachts was direct in his position on the 2019 show. “This was the most qualified traffic at the Vancouver Boat Show in years. We closed three deals this week on a 46 Prestige, 52 Prestige and the Prestige 680.”

Roderick Roy of SeaNet Co. Inc. experienced his first Vancouver Boat Show, and said the reception from the local boating community was positive, as was the response from potential buyers. “We spoke with many serious buyers who were drawn by the color and unique style of the Navetta 58.”

For retail and service based exhibitors such as Hardeep Gill of Royal City Bedding which specializes in boat seats and seat upholstery, the Show has met expectations. “We have had a good response from customers and have laid the groundwork for what we believe will be promising sales over the next several months.”

Friday and Saturday were favorable for Matt Price of Harbour Chandler. “We put more focus on inflatable boats and fishing tackle and we’re optimistic this will pay off.”

Don Prittie, the General Manager of Canoe Cove Marina Ltd., suggested the event has been a positive experience for himself and fellow exhibitors. He adds, “We received feedback from people who hadn’t paid a visit to the event in several years and commented on its substantial positive change and growth.”

With over 125 combined speakers and presentations, the 2019 event contained a program that was educational, entertaining – and had something for everyone. Featured guests, the cast of Discovery Channel’s Cooper’s Treasure, also proved to be a positive draw for the public.

Dates for the 58th Vancouver International Boat Show are scheduled for February 5 – 9, 2020 at BC Place and Granville Island.

Western Canada’s largest consumer boating event, the Vancouver International Boat Show is owned by the Boating BC Association and produced by Canadian Boat Shows.

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