

EVINRUDE HAS CLOSED IT'S MANUFACTURING PLANT, BUT SALES AND SERVICE BY LOCAL EXPERTS CONTINUES

by JOHN H. VARGO, Publisher

The boating world received shocking and surprising news. One of the world's leaders in outboard motor manufacturing will no longer exist.

Evinrude motors parent company, Bombardier Recreational Products (BRP), announced that it would discontinue manufacturing of its Evinrude E-TEC and E-TEC G2 outboard engines. Instead, the company will focus on growing its boat brands and developing technology and innovation of other marine products.

How big was this announcement? Consider that Ole Evinrude invented the first commercially viable outboard engine in 1907. The Evinrude name stepping out of the outboard business would be akin to Ford announcing it would no longer build automobiles.

The announcement came as a surprise to Evinrude's now jobless global workforce of 650, mostly located at its factory in Sturtevant, Wisc. Many of the employees were already on furlough and were told their positions were eliminated by recorded phone message.

Evinrude was a well-known name among the Treasure Coast boating community. Ralph Evinrude was the longtime husband of singer and philanthropist Frances Langford living in Jensen Beach from 1955 until his death in 1986. Evinrude was the president and CEO of Outboard Motor Corporation which manufactured outboards under the Johnson, OMC and Evinrude brand names.

David East, builder of Horizon 3000 catamaran

powerboats in Fort Pierce, has always been a devoted Evinrude outboard engine customer. He said the entire marine industry was shocked by the sudden news.

"It caught everybody off guard," said East, who before returning to the boatbuilding sector, was the longtime editor of Florida Sportsman magazine's Best Boat series of magazines, boats and television programs. "The G2 had no issues mechanically or technologically.

I rig my boats with Evinrude, Yamaha, Mercury or Daihatsu and my boat is better with an Evinrude. It performs better and has much better fuel efficiency."

East said his customers began calling when they heard the news.

"My phone rang off the hook for three days straight," East said. "But people who had ordered boats which are still being built said they don't want any other engine. They want the Evinrudes."

East said despite how the company broke the news, there is plenty of customer loyalty, according to message boards like The Hull Truth and Facebook.

"There isn't the brand bashing you might expect there," East said. "Probably because they built a good product."

East said conversations he had Monday with BRP contacts alleviated some of his concerns. He said the company will have to stand behind warranties and parts for the next 12 years partly because their other product lines like Sea Doo, Ski Doo and Can-Am are cross-owned by loyal

.photo: tug44.org



Mike Acquir shown with one of hundreds of older Evinrudes Mike has worked on over the years.

Evinrude outboard owners.

BRP announced it has entered into an agreement with longtime outboard engine competitor Mercury Marine which will support boat packages and continue to supply outboard engines to our boat brands, Alumacraft and Manitou. It will continue to supply customers and its dealer network service parts and will honor manufacturer limited warranties, plus offer select programs to manage inventory.

The consolidation also will close an Alumacraft operations plant in Arkadelphia, Ark. to one in St. Peter, Minnesota.

According to Mike Aguiar of Riverview Marine, in Catskill, NY, his large inventory of ETEC outboards is still selling well despite the announcement. "When a company has been in business as long as Evinrude, an makes such a wonderful, dependable product, its hard

to keep boaters away from it. Further my personal Evinrude E Tec that I have now had for three years runs as good today as the day I bought it"

There are many wonderful service organizations in the Hudson River Valley that can support Evinrude products and have for decades. Among them is Westerly Marine, Ossining, NY,

Alex Marine Service Plus, of Newburgh, NY, Unique Marine, Poughkeepsie, NY, Coeymans Landing Marine Service, Coeymans, NY, and others.

If you have any questions regarding Evinrude please do not hesitate to contact me, John H. Vargo at email. vargojhvargo@aol.com or cell 845 401 2699.

Mike Aguiar, owner, Riverview Marine, Catskill, NY, Mike was one of the last MASTER TECHNICANS to graduate from the Evinrude School last December. Mike has over 40 years of working on Evinrudes. He is shown here with his personal boat and ETEC EVINRUDE he purchased a few years ago



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