

ISSUE 51

THE DEVICE

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DISPRO OWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



Photo: Paul Jenner

Looking astern. In these strange times we are going through, it's good to look back on all the wonderful times we've had in our boats and all the beautiful lakes and rivers we have cruised. But most of all, it's the great friendships and camaraderie we all experience as members of the DOA. Looking forward, we hope to resume our activities in the near future and create many new memories to look back on in the years ahead.



President's Letter • August 2020

Reviewing our Dippy Tripping Preparedness List and consulting the driving directions are just part of the routine before heading out to find the launch ramp; milling around, chatting, helping others launch; then we are off, pausing to make sure everyone is following – the routine we know well from UUMMTs and Regatta outings. Welcoming the first timers and catching up with the regulars; picnic lunches; discovering new waterways; waving at admiring spectators; and of course, the wine and cheese are highlights of the weekend. These are just some of our fond memories from past DOA events, sadly all postponed this year, making them even more special to look forward to next year.

After a long, cold, windy spring here in Muskoka, we finally launched *Ts Delight* on May 18. Of course it was the usual first launch of the season adventure – loose bolt on the device, loose steering rope and an engine unwilling to start. Finally, we motored off up the Muskoka River and at the confluence, up the South Branch to Muskoka Falls. This section is sparsely developed, mostly pristine. The calamity earlier was soon forgotten as we drifted along basking in “Dippy Time”. To us, that means going slow enough to catch the details but fast enough not to be bored: being in the moment, thankful for calmness, nature, present company . . .

One of the many pleasures of owning and cruising with our Dippy is the diverse waterways we have explored – excursions we likely never would have attempted had it not been for our involvement with DOA. It has given us a sense of adventure and confidence. We have a list of small lakes and rivers in Muskoka and area that we have or are planning to explore. Light to trailer, shallow draft, ease to launch, economic on fuel are advantageous to make spur of the moment plans if the weather looks good.

One of these adventures involved spending about 5 hours circumnavigating Three Mile Lake. We were rained on 3 times and hit 3 unmarked rocks – going completely aground on a shoal where I had to relocate to the bow while Kerry stood on the rock and tried to wedge the boat off with a paddle – no damage, just the usual scratches. A couple from a nearby cottage saw us and came out in their paddle boat to help, but by the time they arrived we were free of the shoal - they mentioned they should have put a marker on this hazard! Back at the loading ramp it was very windy requiring acrobatics to get the boat on the trailer – so just another successful Dippy outing!!

With the lack of DOA group events to report on, please share your Dippy adventures and send photos along with your story for inclusion in the next *Device*.

Much has been written/discussed about the effect of the pandemic on change of pace and how we have reflected on this positive aspect – you know the expression “something good comes out of something bad”. Wouldn't it be the perfect antidote if everyone could experience their version of “Dippy Time”!

Karen and Kerry



Ebb & Flow

Social Events, Milestones and News About DOA Members

Lanny Staples passed away in December 2019. Lanny and Carole were long time members of the DOA and travelled from Tennessee to attend many regattas with their boat “Dixie Lin”. The club extends our sympathy to Carole and family.

Submitted by **Happy Thomson**



Wharerah Welcomes Her Third Generation

Paul Dodington came by yesterday in his family Dis Pro *Wharerah*. On board were Paul's youngest grandchild Edouard and his parents Amy and Jean Francois. *Wharerah* took Paul for his first dippy ride as a baby. She also took Amy for her first ride. Edouard marks the third generation.

Submitted by **Tom Wood**

What Could be Better Than a Lifetime Love Affair with Boats?

In Farley Mowat's book ‘The Boat Who Wouldn't Float’ he expressed the sheer joy to be found in simply “messing about in boats”. I doubt that he had ever encountered a Dippy, however it is an apt expression for how many of us feel about our long and varied experience with boats. My boat story may differ from yours in specifics but I suspect will contain many parallels.

As a very young child growing up in Colchester on the north shore of Lake Erie, my experience began with privately owned small commercial fishing boats (perhaps I could have met Jim Onions without even realizing it). Looking back, I would now call myself a ‘free-range, pastured, wild child’. I was often wandering alone on the government pier as these boats left early morning and returned at sunset. The fishers (yes, there were some women among them) tolerated my inquisitive nature as I engaged them in ‘kid banter’, donning some wry smiles, at my questions about fish and about being out off shore all day -simple questions like, “What do the fish eat?”. “What's the best

way to catch them?”. “What do you have for lunch out there?” They allowed me to jump in and out of their heavy metal boats that smelled of fish as other children might jump on and off playground equipment. These boats were not the fuchsia and lime green ‘plastic’ boats of today’s leisure-seekers, but well used, tough working boats. I gained a sense of comfortableness around them and never quite lost my feeling for those whose livelihoods revolve around the water. No, it wasn’t as romantic perhaps as a Newfoundland fishing village, but it certainly shaped my love of water and boats. I always say that I am happy on the water, in the water, and under the water...the first to swim in the spring and the last out in the fall.

Many boats and boat adventures have come and gone in my life – the small rustic models I built out of scrap pieces of wood left over from my father’s projects to happily float in the shore waves on the beach – watching Miss Supertest and Miss Canada race in the Detroit River in the 50’s (maybe Joe Fossey was there!) – canoeing in Algonquin Park as a teenager, and taking campers canoe tripping down the Rideau from Westport to Kingston as a camp counselor in the 60’s – sailing adventures on the west coast of Canada – the odd kayaking experience – and the usual cottage boating experiences on Sparrow Lake (now teaching grandchildren to love boats).

My love of the Dippy is a recent chapter in the story; one that began with Robert’s brother Alan Clipsham and rides in his Dippy with his wife Sam. After Alan died and Patrick Wren arrived on the scene, he rightly decided to ambush me and take the ‘back door route’ into my heart. While we were out with them in their Dippy he would say, “Pamela, you steer.” It didn’t take long for me to realize that I was happy in that right seat.

Dippy People being what they are were fast to find me a boat that I was comfortable with – a 1920 Port Carling with no ‘bells and whistles’ – one that had been beautifully restored by Fred Forester from Keen near Peterborough. The Foresters were looking for a new owner for their boat and Joe Fossey suggested us. Robert had recently sold his happy little airplane – a 1947 PA11 and we were looking for another adventure together. Serendipity (or should I say ‘serenDippy’) was afoot. Robert being the smart boy that he is said, “I owned and piloted the airplane. You should own and pilot the boat.” I agreed, on the basis that he would assist with the “engineering”. And so, our Dippy Adventure began.



Photo: Paul Jenner

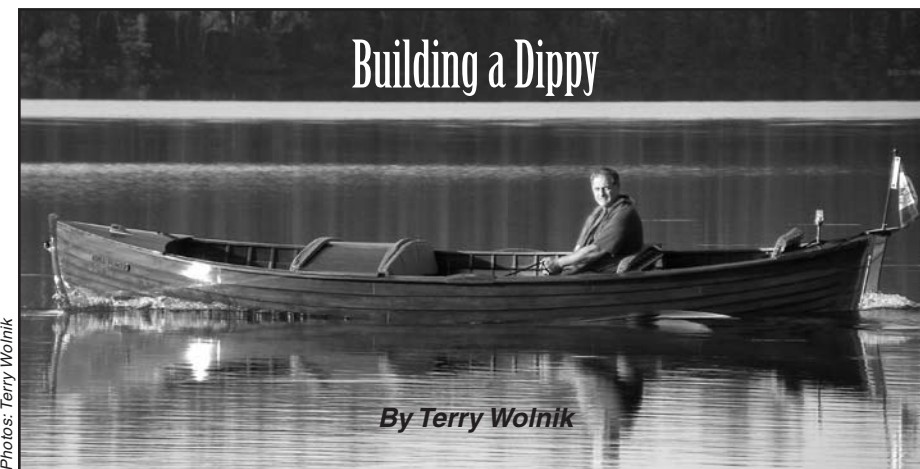


While I know things have changed a lot for women and continue to change, some among us still struggle with some ingrained, time-held traditions. Owning and piloting my own Dippy has involved some struggle, as did having children while maintaining my birth name; like carving out my career in the under appreciated arts; like teaching outdoor ed to classroom teachers, and, and, and. But a certain amount of paddling upstream is what makes for an interesting life ,at least I think so. I do want to thank Paul Gockel for always knowing it was my boat and that I was in the ‘right seat’. I could whine about the many times people would not look me in the eye and talk to me about my boat, but rather spoke with Robert like I was not there, or about the signs at boat shows which listed Robert as the boat owner, or the lists of boat owners who identified me by Robert’s last name instead of my own name ‘Gibson’, but I guess this is part of living in this time frame, and why there is a Me Too movement (amongst the many other movements afoot to establish human equality). I am not bitter, merely stating the events as I have lived them. I write these words because my firm-footed grandmother informed me very early in my life that I was “a Charlebois Woman -strong, forthright, and resilient”. Just sayin’!

Being with this wonderful group of people in the DOA has been a great adventure right from the start – a learning adventure, my favourite kind. You don’t need to know all the answers to why these quirky little boats behave as they do, you just have to be willing to learn from them and from the great wealth of knowledge and experience collectively held and shared by the group. I guess it is this sharing that I enjoy most.

In the end, I probably have been towed the most, had my boat refuse to start the most and even upon occasion gotten lost, but this wonderful group of boat lovers embraces you anyway – even gives you awards for being inept (we have probably won them all)! The laughter, the fun, and all of us enjoying boats together in the DOA make this another fabulous adventure as I continue “messaging about in a boat”!

Pamela Gibson



Photos: Terry Wolnik

For all those who have ventured into building a Dippy, you know it is a lot more involved than what is written here.

Years have passed since we dreamed of building our retirement home on the shores of a wonderful lake, and part of that dream was to enjoy being on the water as well as the shore. We remember having never heard of a “Dippy” when this boat first came into our lives. It was an episode of “Cottage Life” that opened our eyes. We watched as this



strange boat would putt-putt-putt across the water while listening to the explanation of how it worked. It was amazing to see a retractable propeller... Who would have thought of such a thing? We knew instantly that this was our type of boat. We knew these boats were classic pieces of history and soon realized that acquiring one (at that time) that did not require almost a complete restoration was not the easiest thing to do. The only option left to us was simple – we'd build one!

With the idea of building, we began searching for plans and parts and started understanding what was required. Even though we did not own a Dippy, joining the DOA was one of the first steps. Still years before laying a keel, we phoned Paul Dodington about parts that were available and made plans to stop and visit with him on our next driving trip through the area. Paul was skeptical about our plans, saying that he knew many times people who had intentions of building a Dippy, only to give up in frustration.

From advertisements in the DOA trader, we made calls in our search for the parts that make a Dippy what it is. We were excited to finally find a "Device". It was old and needed some work, but finding one was a big step.

Our biggest treasure (again, found through the DOA trader) was Bert Trollope in Chatham. Bert had a frame on which he had recently built his own Dippy. We bought his frame and he was thrilled that it would build another boat. Bert was awesome, and in the years ahead helped us through our own construction. As weeks turned into months Bert and I would talk on the phone for hours and hours. It took Bert four years to build his boat and I thought for sure I could do it faster. I was wrong! "Do you want it done fast, or want it done right?" he would ask.

When possible, we used material that we had at hand, namely a large supply of cedar and black ash. In addition, we bought oak for the keel and cypress for the hull. For months our phone calls across North America searching for cypress were disappointing, but eventually we found a logging company on Vancouver Island that had cypress available as a specialty wood. We ordered the cypress milled to our specifications in 16-foot lengths, and soon the bundle of lumber was on its way. Surprisingly, the shipping costs



Clamps, clamps and more clamps. Can you ever have enough when you build a boat?

were probably the least expensive part of the entire construction. It was only \$225.00 from Vancouver Island to where we lived outside Thunder Bay.

With lumber at hand you might think we would just jump in and start putting wood together. Having never done anything like this before, I knew there was "learning" to do first. Before steaming any board into shape, or doing any scarf joints, I used scrap pieces of lumber to practice all the joints, over and over until I was satisfied. From thick pieces of black ash we made practice bow and stern posts, just to learn how to cut each into the right shape to accept the cypress; then I had to learn to attach each of these onto a practice keel as well.

Once the keel was laid and joined to the bow and stern posts, it was time to fit the garboard strake. First one side was joined into the keel, then the other. A mirror image was needed. We built a huge pair of callipers to measure from one side of centre to the other, plank by plank. Slowly, very slowly, the hull took form.

Leaving the original construction method, we chose to follow Bert Trollope's advice and epoxy every joint. We became well acquainted with the people at the West Epoxy company and learned a great deal from them. The "Six10" epoxy in a caulking tube was new at the time, but made applying it easy. We lost count of how many tubes we used. Later came gallons of resin and quarts of hardener for every piece of wood we used.



Every joint of the hull planking was constructed with a one-inch overlap. As well as using epoxy, stainless steel screws were used to join several layers together to form the keel, and one screw was used in every hull plank to have a mechanical fastener joining the planks into the bow and stern posts. Probably the most nerve wracking moment in construction was cutting a big hole into a good boat! Positioning the device was crucial, and once cut, can't be undone. We delayed a few times with nervous tension until that first cut was finally made. In the end, the positioning of the hole was perfect. Once the hull was finished and the hole for the "device" was cut, the sanding began. Lots of sanding!

When we had the hull completed, we applied four coats of water based stain, followed by 5 coats of clear epoxy, followed by 5 coats of clear varnish. With this stage finished, we had friends come to visit and lift the shell off the mould and flip it upright onto a cradle. At this point, the sanding, epoxy and varnish coats were repeated to finish the inside. The boat being epoxied together is stronger than we could have imagined, but to give it an authentic look, we decided to install ribs. For that we used the black ash we

had on hand from our property. The ash is very straight grained and this made for easy steaming and bending into shape.

While the months passed doing all of this, we were in touch with the Electric Yacht Company in Golden Valley, Minnesota. They asked for all the specs on a Dippy and determined what our electric requirements were, to provide us with the boat's maximum speed. We installed a 48-volt, 5-HP electric drive system. (More HP than was needed, but it was the smallest they made.) Electric Yacht builds drop-in replacement motors for boats of any size and horse power. Their system requires minimal electrical knowledge as the motor and controllers are all incorporated into one unit that is easy to install; just connect the batteries and plug in the throttle control. Power for the motor and on-board electrical needs comes from 4-AGM (absorbed glass mat) batteries. Electrical power runs through two master switches; one for the motor and one for the on-board electronics. There is also a keyed switch on the throttle.



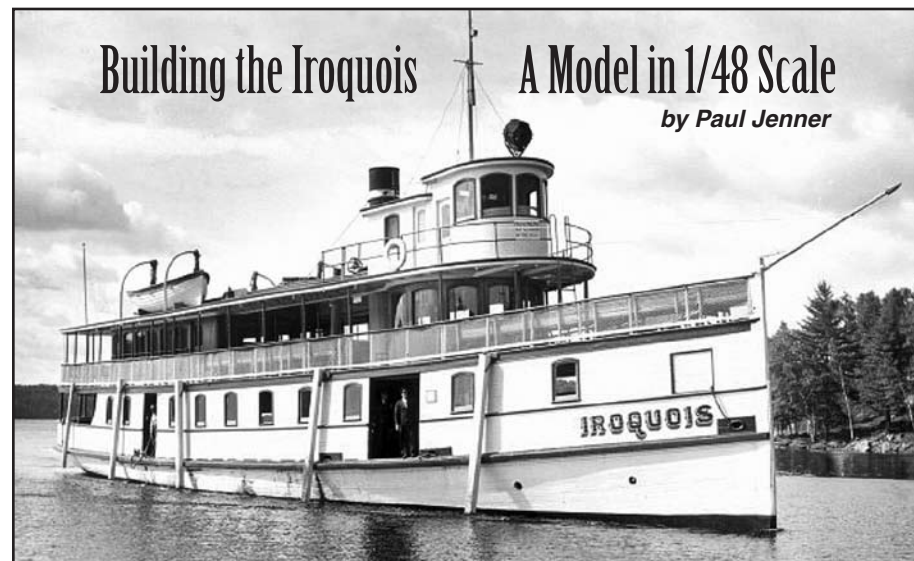
The electric drive system makes for a reasonably quiet ride. We are told by Electric Yacht that their newer motors are even quieter. The motor itself is geared to the prop shaft at a 3/1 ratio. There is an onboard display that shows the motor RPM, voltage and real-time remaining hours of run-time (at whatever throttle setting is selected). Watch this or you'll be rowing to shore. Simple math gives us the exact RPM to the prop. Time on the water on a full charge can vary, depending on wind, waves and the number of passengers. For us, on a normal outing, cruising at a 50% throttle speed, we can easily get 15 to 20 hours of run time. As expected, if you increase to full throttle that time can be reduced to just a few hours.

Once we had the interior work started, we were back in touch with Paul Dodington, where he did some work for us and supplied a variety of original parts, including a stuffing box, universal joint and prop shafts.

Building a boat shouldn't be work. You have to love it, as it takes a lot of determination and patience. Did I mention PATIENCE? Also, as I said earlier, thanks must be given to Bert Trollope and Paul Dodington for the many hours of their time they gave on the phone.

Our Dippy was christened as the HMS Buntly and launched in May 2012. She has given us many hours of wonderful boating, with many more to come!

Happy boating to all, Terry Wolnik



Building the Iroquois

A Model in 1/48 Scale

by Paul Jenner

It all started more than two years ago when I became interested in building an O scale (1/4 inch to the foot) model railway based on the Huntsville & Lake of Bays Railway. The very quirkiness of the 1-1/2 mile prototype has always intrigued me. The HLOBR provided the link between Lake of Bays and Peninsula Lake and was an integral part of a wider transportation system that included steamships. The line included just two terminal stations, North Portage and South Portage, and featured steep gradients, sharp curves and a switchback.

From its diminutive second hand locomotives and home built flatcars and boxcars to the re-purposed streetcars that became its passenger cars, the railway provides a wealth of modelling opportunities. However, the big challenge is that mostly everything would have to be scratchbuilt. But before I even got to the planning stages I became convinced that a model of South Portage or North Portage would be incomplete without one of the company's steamships. I believed that if I could build a decent scale model of one of the ships, it would be a great start and further inspire me accomplish the rest of the modelling. I chose to model the Iroquois because a layout based on South Portage appealed to me and that's how it all began.

The Iroquois was built at South Portage and served South Portage, Dorset, the Bigwin Inn and many other resorts on Lake of Bays from 1907 until 1948. She sank at South Portage in 1949 and is now part of the wharf that exists there today.

Research There is a fair amount of information and quite a few photos of the Iroquois available in various published works and a search on the internet also proved to be valuable. Mary Storey also provided some photos from the archives at the Muskoka Discovery Centre. The research becomes fun when you discover yet another photo that shows a new view or aspect of the ship you hadn't seen before.

But of course no plans exist for the Iroquois, so my first task was to draw up my own plans based on a few known dimensions and from scale projections from the images that I had collected for reference. This was a fairly lengthy process but I had a good understanding of how these ships were constructed so the plans came together very well.

Building the Model Because the model will eventually become a static part of a model railway layout, I decided to construct a waterline model. There was no need to build the

underwater portion of the hull. I began by roughly sketching out how I would construct all the various parts and how they would finally all come together on the final model.

I was presented with many modelling questions and challenges and each had to be solved before I could proceed further. What materials would I use for construction? How would I make those tiny fire buckets. What material would make a convincing flag hanging limp at the stern. What would I use to model the wire mesh under the handrail that encircles the promenade deck?



Photo: Paul Jenner

The model is 29-1/2" from stern to stern with the steering pole projecting a further 3" forward.

I persevered and although construction took considerably longer than it did to build the real "Iroquois", I was very pleased with the final model. Ultimately, there was a great feeling of accomplishment when all those challenges were overcome.

Materials When it comes to modelling materials, I must confess to being a bit of a recycler. I have a stash of found material that will of course come in handy some day! Pretty well any item that I see and especially anything that is destined to be thrown away will come under close scrutiny. I simply ask myself how can I re-purpose this item or how can I use that material in a model? Just ask my wife Dorene!

As this model is 100 percent scratchbuilt there was a multitude of different materials used from many different sources. The lower hull was shaped from MDF and a framework was built on top of that to enclose the main deck. The main framing material was birch craft sticks of various sizes cut to shape and glued. Lots of stripwood was also used, mostly milled on a homemade mini table saw utilising a Dremel tool and a small circular saw blade.

Various thicknesses of card stock was used extensively throughout the model. Clear plastic from discarded packaging was used for glazing the many windows. Tapered dowels became the mast and flag staff. All the vertical posts between the decks started life as 2mm diameter wooden knitting needles, suitably reduced in diameter through a drawplate. The lifeboats were carved from a soft cedar block then covered with cardstock planks. Various sizes of copper and brass wire were used and steel wire was used for

the railings around the wheelhouse. A soft aluminum wire which was easily tapered and bent was perfect for the davits. The wire mesh around the promenade deck ended up being from a fine nylon mesh zip folder found at the dollar store. The list goes on.

Almost all of the model was painted with dollar store acrylic craft paint, mixed to achieve the right colours. The water is represented by layers of toilet paper, saturated with diluted pvc glue and then manipulated to form the surface texture. When dry it was painted and given two coats of gloss medium. That really set the model off nicely.

The two figures (the captain and a deckhand) are about 1-3/8" tall and were also handmade by covering a basic skeleton of micro dowels with layers of wood filler and then carving and scraping with a sharp exacto knife until I was satisfied that the figures gave a fairly realistic impression of scale people. Unfortunately, two people are not enough! I really need to mass produce some figures to show a full complement of passengers. Alas, the next challenge awaits!

Paul Jenner

Ethanol in Gasoline

After installing my new stainless steel gas tank and a new fuel line in the spring of 2019 and then using the boat for 3 months, I was somewhat dismayed to find 'gum' in the fuel/water separator. After I thought I had completely drained the tank last fall I discovered this spring that the floor of the tank was covered in 'congealed gum'. This article is the result of my search for understanding. I have tried to present the best information available from internet sources that appear most reputable and appropriate. The single best source was 'Mercury Marine's View of Ethanol'. As they are the worlds largest marine engine manufacturer, they have a vested interest in the subject!

The Law – The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks regulates the amount of renewable content found in gasoline sold in Ontario. Starting in 2020, fuel suppliers must maintain at least an annual average of 10% renewable content (such as ethanol) in the gasoline they sell in Ontario. This is called E10 and until this year we have been served E5 a 5% ethanol gasoline mixture. However, there is a provision in this law to allow non-ethanol gasoline to be sold for aircraft and marine use.

Therefore, unless the tank at the marina is marked 'Ethanol Free' assume it is E10. Even then, it may contain water, buyer beware!

Background – A DisPro fuel system consists of a fuel tank and a carburetor which are vented to the atmosphere which in a wooden boat is typically a 'high humidity environment'. Modern car/light truck fuel systems are designed for ethanol/gasoline fuel by having a closed fuel system with a carbon/desiccant filter, to minimize the water absorption, and are sealed and pressurized to minimize evaporation of the volatiles in the fuel.

Ethanol – Ethanol is a non-fossil fuel that is produced from a variety of agricultural crops such as sugarcane, corn and wheat. Yes, the ethanol in fuel is ethyl alcohol, the same type of alcohol found in alcoholic beverages. Ethanol has a higher octane number than gasoline and is used to oxygenate the fuel, which reduces air pollution.

Pure ethanol is hygroscopic; it attracts water, to the point that it will pull it out of the air. Ethanol and gasoline will mix, but ethanol, gasoline and water will not; the ethanol-water mixture will come out of solution and settle on the bottom of your tank, fuel lines, and/or carburetor float bowl.

Gasoline – Gasoline is an engineered hydrocarbon fuel which contains up to 108 additives according to one article I read.

The only scientific study I could find on-line presented the following details:

Gasoline is highly volatile and evaporation of the most volatile fuel components occurs relatively quickly which makes our Dippy engines harder to start and effects 'drivability'.

Increasing the ethanol content in gasoline increases the rate of moisture absorption resulting in phase separation, the water separates from the gasoline and settles to the bottom of the tank.

Dippy fuel tanks are normally tightly closed to limit gasoline evaporation, but in the plastic containers it can escape by permeation through the tank walls. When the boat is running the gasoline volume in the tank is reduced and ambient air enters and remains in contact with the fuel during storage. This is when the water in the air has a chance to enter the fuel.

The study included the following Q&A:

Q: Is an additive available that can prevent phase separation?

A: No, there is no practical additive that can prevent phase separation from occurring. The only practical solution is to keep water from accumulating in the tank in the first place.

Q: Are there any additives that can allow the phase-separated mixture to remix when added to the fuel tank?

A: No, the only way to avoid further problems is to remove the water, dispose of the depleted fuel, clean the tank and start with a fresh, dry load of fuel.

Q: Is there a simple solution to water condensation in the tank as a result of ethanol?

A: It is best to maintain a full tank of fuel when the engine is not in use. This will reduce the air space above the fuel and will reduce the flow of air in and out of the tank with changes in temperature. This will reduce condensation on the internal walls of the tank and will limit exposure of the ethanol in the fuel to humidity and condensation.

My Recommendations

To minimize issues with E10 fuel I would recommend:

1. Buy your fuel from a Marina with tanks marked 'Ethanol Free'.
2. Treat it immediately with a Fuel Stabilizer. This will help stabilize the gasoline to minimize degradation in plastic containers during storage.
3. Seal your stored gas containers well.
4. Keep your DisPro tank relatively full when not in use.
5. Drain your tank, carburetor and lines completely when storing the boat for over two months, especially if it is in a boathouse.
6. After storage confirm that your system is free of water prior to refilling it.

I have followed these recommendation's this year and with 50 litres of fuel consumed, still no 'gum' in the fuel/water separator!

Kerry Harmon



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