2026

Wisconsin Marine Association Fall Conference

November 17 and 18, 2026

Rothschild, WI – Holiday Inn



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Welcome

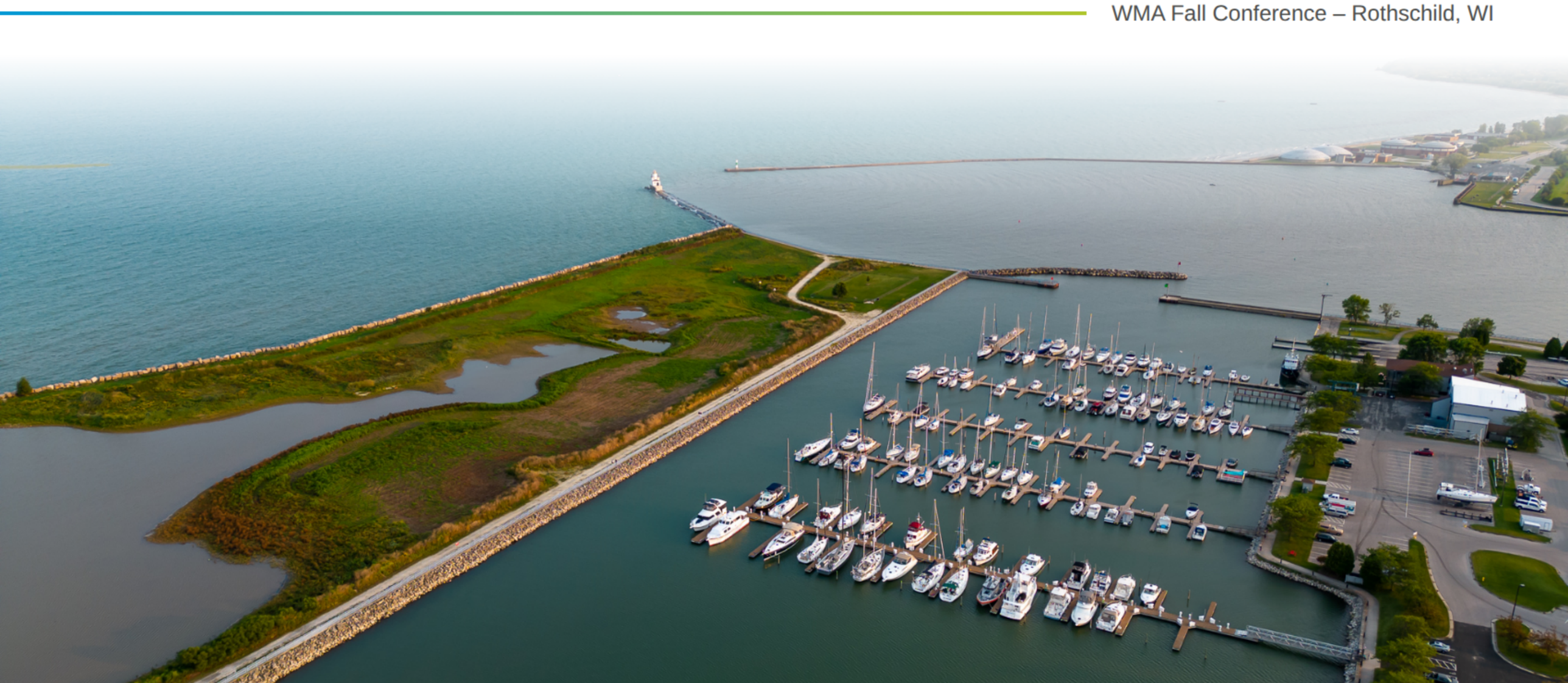
On behalf of the Wisconsin Marine Association, welcome to our 2026 Fall Conference. We're grateful for another year of bringing Wisconsin's marina community together to share ideas, build partnerships, and celebrate the work we do to keep our waters safe, clean, and thriving.



Matt **Bauer**

Executive Director & Chairman of the Board
Wisconsin Marine Association

Matt Bauer brings more than 20 years of experience in the marina industry, having worked his way up from Dock Hand to General Manager to overseeing a portfolio of marinas. As Executive Director and Chairman of the Board of the Wisconsin Marine Association, Matt continues to be excited to promote safe, clean boating in Wisconsin and to mentor the next generation of marina professionals.



Schedule

For over 17 years, we have been working to unite Wisconsin boating and bring awareness to the state's marine industry! Join us for our annual conference featuring industry-leading speakers, corporate partners, and networking with Wisconsin marinas. Thank you for supporting us!

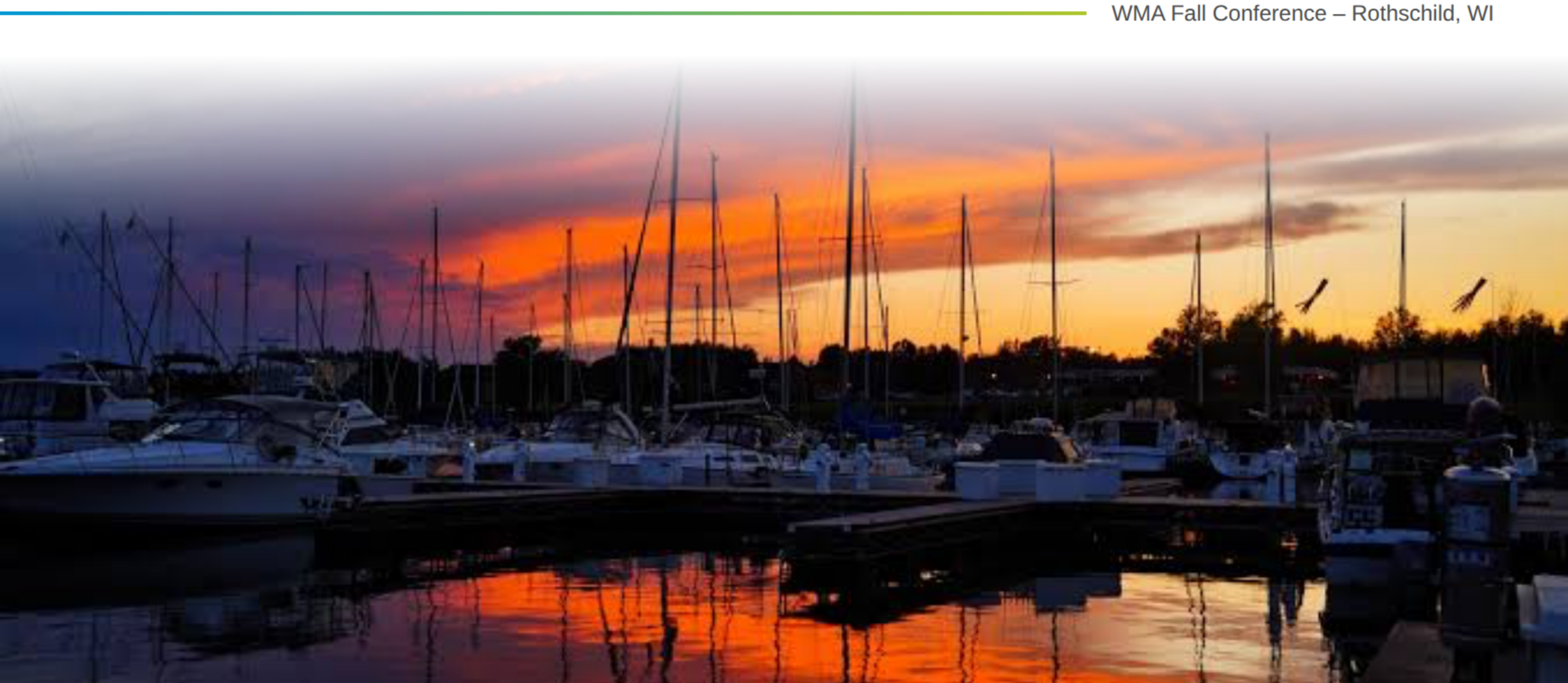
Tuesday, November 17

Time	Topic
9:00 AM	Board Meeting – **Matt Bauer**
11:30 AM	Registration
12:00 PM	Welcome, Association Updates – **Matt Bauer**
12:30 PM	AMI Partnership and Benefits, CMM/CMO Training – **Merritt Alves**
1:00 PM	Why Boaters Expect More: Enhancing Guest Experience Through Technology – **Becca Jaeger, Dockwa**
2:00 PM	Meet the Exhibitors – **Matt Bauer**
2:30 PM	Electrical Code Updates & Preventive Maintenance – **Dan O'Neill & Chris Little, O'Neill Electric**
3:30 PM	Stop Watching AI. Start Using It. – **Greg McDonald, Mavriq Group**
5:00 PM	Free Time
5:30 PM	Cocktail Hour
6:00 – 7:30 PM	Dinner / Conference Program *(incl. Clean Marina Awards)* – **At the Hotel**
7:45 – 8:00 PM	Shuttle Service Begins
8:00 – 11:00 PM	WMA After Hours at The Garage – **Live Music**
Throughout the Evening	Shuttle Service Back to Hotel

Join us for an "After Hours" event at The Garage with live music! **Sponsored by Reefpoint Marina.**

Wednesday, November 18

Time	Topic
8:30 AM	Coffee / Welcome – **Board of Directors**
9:00 AM	Small Moments, Big Loyalty: The Customer Experience Advantage *(Keynote)* – **Anthony Reeves**
10:00 AM	Wisconsin's Outdoor Opportunity – **Cassie Mordini**
11:00 AM	Take Off the Cape – **Greg McDonald, Mavriq Group**
12:00 PM	Lunch – **Holiday Inn Staff**
1:00 PM	Clean Marina Program Update – **Theresa Qualls**
1:15 PM	Flooding Hydrology of the Wolf River – **Jason Alumbaugh, National Weather Service**
1:30 PM	Marina Recovery: Lessons from the Wolf River Flood – **Todd Gleisner & Jen Mentzel, Anchor Point Marina**
2:00 PM	Clean Vessel Act & Boating Infrastructure Grant Programs – **Jennifer Gihring, Wisconsin DNR**
2:30 PM	OSHA Boot Camp – **Robert Smith**
3:30 PM	Drawing for Door Prizes, Wrap Up – **Matt Bauer**



Speakers

Keynote



Anthony **Reeves**

Award-Winning Writer & Speaker
Author, *Eat the Donkey*

Anthony Reeves has spent his career building brands from the inside, most recently as VP of Global Brand and Creative at Kohler Co., after leading growth at Amazon, the world's most customer-obsessed company. He is the author of *Eat the Donkey: Why Great Companies Embrace Discomfort*, and speaks nationally on leadership, brand, and the small decisions that build customer loyalty.

Small Moments, Big Loyalty: The Customer Experience Advantage

Customer experience isn't won in the big swings – it's won in the small, repeatable moments most service businesses never bother to create on purpose: how a call gets answered, how a mistake gets owned, what happens in the ninety seconds before a boater pulls up to the dock. Anthony's session will help your team identify the one thing your marina is actually great at, defend it relentlessly, and build the small, unglamorous habits that turn it into the reason boaters keep coming back.



WMA Fall Conference – Rothschild, WI



Merritt **Alves**

Training Coordinator, AMI Training Institute
Membership Coordinator, AMI Membership
Association of Marina Industries

Merritt Alves serves as Training Coordinator with the AMI Training Institute and Membership Coordinator for AMI Membership at the Association of Marina Industries, supporting marina professionals nationwide through credentialing and training programs.

AMI Partnership and Benefits, CMM/CMO Training

Merritt will walk through the value of WMA's partnership with AMI, including full Association of Marina Industries membership, and the path to CMM/CMO credentialing for marina managers and operators.



Becca **Jaeger**

Account Executive
Dockwa

Becca Jaeger is an Account Executive at Dockwa, the platform powering life on the water for thousands of marinas and hundreds of thousands of boaters across North America. She's been with Dockwa for three years, and is no stranger to the marina industry – a lifelong avid boater, Becca also worked at a marina for seven years throughout high school and college.

Why Boaters Expect More: Enhancing Guest Experience Through Technology

Boater expectations keep rising – Becca will focus on how marinas can enhance customer relationships and the guest experience, and how technology can help make that possible.





Dan **O’Neill**

Master Electrician, President & Founder
O’Neill Electric, Inc.

Dan O’Neill is a Master Electrician and President & Founder of O’Neill Electric, Inc. With a career rooted in the electrical industry, Dan has led his company in developing specialized expertise in marine electrical systems.



Chris **Little**

Preventive Maintenance Consultant
O’Neill Electric, Inc.

Chris Little is a Preventive Maintenance Consultant at O’Neill Electric, Inc. He works closely with facility teams and property managers to help prevent electrical issues, reduce downtime and extend equipment life through services such as thermal scanning and panel upgrades. Before entering the electrical industry, he spent 12 years in the automotive field, where he earned the Nissan Award of Excellence and developed his straightforward, relationship-focused approach.

Electrical Code Updates & Preventive Maintenance

Dan and Chris will discuss preventive electrical maintenance for marinas, including leakage-current testing, GFCI tripping and troubleshooting, and will review key Wisconsin code updates following the state’s adoption of the 2023 National Electrical Code.





Cassie **Mordini**

Director
Wisconsin Office of Outdoor Recreation

Cassie Mordini is the Director of the Wisconsin Office of Outdoor Recreation. Created by the Department of Tourism, the Office works to strengthen and amplify Wisconsin's outdoor recreation industry and offerings, driving economic impact and enhancing quality of life across the state. Mordini joined the Office in February 2020 and became director in January 2024, bringing nearly two decades of experience across retail, nonprofit and government.

Wisconsin's Outdoor Opportunity

Wisconsin has a strong outdoor recreation story, but there are more opportunities ahead. This presentation will explore the economic and community impact of outdoor recreation, emerging trends, and what Wisconsin can do to build on its strengths, learn from other states, and make the most of the outdoors.



Jennifer **Gihring**

Manager, Conservation Grants Section
Wisconsin DNR

As Manager of the Wisconsin DNR Conservation Grants Section, Jennifer leads a team of professionals who provide financial assistance to communities, businesses, organizations, and individuals statewide, including the Clean Vessel Act (CVA) and Boating Infrastructure (BIG) Grants. A proud Wisconsin native and Badger alum, Jennifer has more than 25 years of experience as a water resources and financial assistance professional, and has been with the Wisconsin DNR for 10 years.

Clean Vessel Act and Boating Infrastructure Grant Programs – Partnerships to Expand Public Access

Through CVA and BIG, the DNR partners with public and private marinas to expand public access to high-quality recreational boating facilities. Jennifer will cover how these programs work and how your marina can partner with the DNR.





Greg **McDonald**

Senior Partner, Strategy
Mavriq Group

Greg McDonald is Senior Partner, Strategy at Mavriq Group, where he works with founders and leadership teams on growth strategy, positioning, revenue, technology, and the structural issues that keep businesses dependent on heroics. He has spent more than 25 years working across software, sales, marketing, and executive leadership, and previously led digital marketing and consumer engagement at Mercury Marine – including bringing significant digital capabilities in-house and improving how Mercury supported its dealer network.

He led digital efforts around major product launches, including Mercury's 600hp V12 Verado during COVID, when boat shows and in-person launch events weren't an option – a digital-first launch across media, dealers, boat builders, influencers, PR, email and social that drew more than 100,000 visitors on its first day. Greg is an avid boater and spends as much time as possible on the water at his family's place near Pickerel, Wisconsin.

Stop Watching AI. Start Using It.

Practical AI for people who have actual work to do

AI is everywhere right now. Depending on who you listen to, it will either solve every business problem by next Tuesday or replace all of us shortly after lunch.

Reality is a little more useful.

In this hands-on session, we'll look at where AI actually stands today, some of the major tools available, and practical ways businesses can use them right now.

We'll talk about using AI to eliminate drudgery, speed up everyday work, preserve knowledge, and help good employees become more effective. We'll work through examples relevant to the marine space, then attendees will get a chance to try things themselves.

The goal is not to turn anyone into an AI expert. It is to make sure you leave more comfortable, more curious, and with at least a few things you can actually use when you get back to work.

Please bring a laptop, tablet, or phone. I strongly recommend creating an account with an AI tool before the session so we don't spend our time together resetting passwords. ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Microsoft Copilot or another AI assistant are all fine. The session will be tool-agnostic.

No AI experience required. Curiosity helps!



Greg **McDonald**

Senior Partner, Strategy
Mavriq Group

Take Off the Cape

Building a business that doesn’t depend on heroes

Every business has a hero.
Sometimes it’s the owner.
Sometimes it’s the service manager who knows where everything is.
Sometimes it’s the salesperson who can fix every customer problem.
Sometimes it’s the office manager who quietly holds the entire company together with a combination of experience, sticky notes, and mild panic.

Heroes are valuable. Depending on heroics is not.

If your business only works because certain people constantly remember everything, solve everything, catch every mistake and save the day, you don’t really have a system. You have a cape.

We’ll talk about how to identify where heroics are hiding weaknesses in the business, capture knowledge that lives inside people’s heads, build better processes and accountability, and create an organization that doesn’t require the same people to keep rescuing it.

This isn’t just a founder problem. Heroes can exist at every level of a company, and they often pay for it with burnout.

For owners, we’ll also tackle a bigger question: are you building a business that can eventually thrive without you, or just creating a job nobody else knows how to do?

And for everyone else in the room, we’ll talk about how to help the hero next to you finally take off the cape.





Jason **Alumbaugh**

Lead Meteorologist & Hydrology Program Manager
National Weather Service, Green Bay

Flooding Hydrology of the Wolf River

Jason Alumbaugh is a Lead Meteorologist and Hydrology Program Manager at the National Weather Service Green Bay office. With the NWS since 1999 — including previous experience in Marquette, Michigan, and Buffalo, New York — Jason has extensive expertise in marine weather, winter weather, and hydrology, including serving as NWS Green Bay's primary point of contact to internal and external partners during the historic 2026 spring flooding on the Wolf River.

Additionally, during his NWS career he has overseen NWS marine forecasting and services for Lakes Superior, Michigan, Erie, and Ontario.





Todd **Gleisner**

Owner
Anchor Point Marina

Todd Gleisner started in the marine industry in 2000 working at a boat dealership during summers between college, then worked in sales for American Marine in La Crosse, WI and Dubuque, IA, followed by a career at Yamaha Motor Corp rising to national sales program manager. In 2013, Todd and his wife formed Anchor Point Marina LLC and purchased Party Doll Fleet Marina, since growing it into a full-service 125-slip marina.



Jen **Mentzel**

General Manager
Anchor Point Marina

Jen Mentzel began her career in early childhood education before transitioning into the marine industry, where the same skills – clear communication, organization, and supporting people through busy days – made for a natural fit. Today she manages day-to-day operations at Anchor Point Marina.

Marina Recovery: Lessons from the Wolf River Flood

Todd and Jen share firsthand lessons from navigating flood recovery at Anchor Point Marina – what happened, what they wish they'd known, and how other marinas can prepare.





Robert **Smith**

Safety Consultant
Fisher Phillips Workplace Safety

Robert Smith, a Safety Professional (CSP) and Safety Consultant in the Fisher Phillips Workplace Safety practice group, brings valuable skills to any organization looking to enhance its safety compliance across manufacturing, construction, marine, healthcare, automotive, and heavy industrial industries.

OSHA Boot Camp

Robert's familiarity with OSHA regulations, coupled with a results-oriented approach to safety program management, helps him directly contribute to marina and marine business safety compliance. Don't miss this session!



Theresa **Qualls**

Wisconsin Clean Marina Program Coordinator

Theresa is the Wisconsin Clean Marina Program Coordinator with the University of Wisconsin Sea Grant, a role she has held since 2018. As program coordinator, Theresa is responsible for certifying and re-certifying clean marinas throughout the state, recruiting pledged marinas to the program, and providing guidance, technical assistance and training to marina operators and managers.

Clean Marina Program Update & Clean Marina Awards



Why Become a WMA Member?

The WMA is always looking to grow and add more knowledgeable members to our organization. We are especially grateful for everything our marina community does for the state & boating. Here is what we offer you:

1. Annual WMA memberships include a full Association of Marina Industries (AMI) membership.
2. Networking with other marinas & industry partners to share ideas that can positively affect your bottom line.
3. Marketing and media coverage with WMA website, projects, press releases, promotions, social media, and more.
4. Information on important issues such as marine industry trends, dredging, lake levels, invasive species, Clean Marina Program, and new regulations.
5. Attend annual events including regional meetings and the WMA Fall Conference.

Our Mission

The WMA includes members of recreational boating facilities and marine businesses dedicated to the sharing of ideas, knowledge, and experience to improve, protect, and advance the interests of the marine industry in Wisconsin while acting as stewards of our freshwater resources.

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