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5 QUESTIONS WITH ...

A boat isn't needed to enjoy this yacht club

Membership chief welcoming to all

May 27, 2007

BY JAVAN KIENZLE
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

Listening to Timothy Briody, the new membership director of the Detroit Yacht Club, describe the club, one might envision Xanadu's stately pleasure dome.

Briody (pronounced BRIDE-y), 57, was born in Detroit, grew up in Garden City and graduated from Divine Child in Dearborn. He studied art and graphic design at Detroit's College for Creative Studies, received a business degree in marketing from the University of Detroit, and retired at age 49 after 30 years with Ford Motor Co.

He and his wife, Louise, live in Dearborn. The Briodys have two sons and three grandchildren (and a fourth on the way).

QUESTION: What have you done since retiring from Ford?

ANSWER: I was executive director of the Dearborn Community Arts Council, then administrative director of the Chamber Music Society of Detroit. I'm a freelance artist -- pen and ink. I do commission work -- portraits, buildings, landscapes, live or from photos -- and I do drawings of pets to generate funds for the Dearborn Animal Shelter.

Q: How did you come to the DYC?

A: I answered an ad that said 'Private Club.' I had no idea it was the yacht club. But it was a fit for me because I love so much beauty and history. Experiencing the friendliness and the inclusiveness and the diversity of the club's members makes it easy for me to say to prospective members, "Why wouldn't you want to be part of this?"

Q: What's the most difficult part of your job?

A: I have to dispel the misconception that this is an expensive, exclusive club. I want people to become aware of one of Detroit's best-kept secrets. It should not be a secret; it's one of Detroit's jewels. It's a place for people to enjoy themselves, to participate in family and social events. The initial fee is considerably lower than the majority of other clubs; the dues requirements are just perfect.

Q: So what's your answer to people who say, 'Why should I join a yacht club; I don't own a yacht?'

A: Of our approximately 950 members, 70% are non-boaters. There is the social aspect, the recreation, the workout facilities, the tennis program, the top-notch restaurant -- and one of the best sailing classes in the region. A major drawing factor for families is the children's sailing program. So many generations brought up their kids -- the Yacht Brats -- here. It's really a family place. We just had a reunion for former members; over 500 came.

Q: Where do you go on vacation?

A: We go to Folly Island, off Charleston (S.C.). We traded with owners of a house on the beach there -- my drawings for a stay at their house. I'm willing to do that anywhere in the world, if anyone wishes to call me.

For more information, visit www.dyc.com or call 313-824-1200, ext. 233.

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Timothy Briody

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