

AIM Marine Group Editor's Choice Awards

Lifetime Achievement Award:

Madame Annette Beneteau-Roux

Good Samaritan Award: Robert C. Arzbaeher, CEO, Actuant Corp.

Best Overall Boat of the Year: Ocean Alexander 120

Most Innovative New Design: Wider 42

Best New Builder: Belize Yachts by Riviera

Most Innovative New Sailboat:

Sig 45 catamaran

Most Innovative New Technology: Twin Disc

Express Joystick

AIM Green Award: Greenline 40

Best Center Console

Less than 30 feet: Boston Whaler

210 Montauk

30-40 feet: Contender 30 ST

40-plus feet: Intrepid 400

Best Down East

25-35 feet: Hinckley T34

35-45 feet: Hunt 44

45-55 feet: Sabre 48

55-65 feet: Grand Banks 55 Eastbay

65-plus feet: Palm Beach 65

Best Passagemaker

30-40 feet: Beneteau Swift Trawler 34

40-50 feet: Magellano 43

50-60 feet: Krogen 52

60-70 feet: Nordhavn 63

70-80 feet: Outer Reef 70

80-100 feet: Marlow 97

Best Tender

Under 20 feet: Rendova XT 15

Over 20 feet: Protector 30

Best Sportfish

40-49 feet: Cabo 44

50-59 feet: Viking 55

60-plus feet: Viking 66

Best Import Motoryacht

20-30 feet: Riva 27 Iseo

30-40 feet: Princess V39

40-50 feet: Sealine SC42

50-60 feet: Maritimo M58

60-70 feet: Fairline 60 Squadron

70-80 feet: Monte Carlo 70

80-90 feet: Ferretti 870

90-100 feet: Sanlorenzo 94

100-110 feet: Horizon 105

Best Domestic Motoryacht

20-30 feet: Cutwater 28

30-40: Chris-Craft 36

40-50: Cruisers 45 Cantius

50-60 feet: Sea Ray 510

60-70 feet: Marquis 630

80-100 feet: Pacific Mariner 85

BEST of the BEST



AIM Marine Group Editor's Choice Awards
recognize top boats, achievements and more



Ocean Alexander 120, Best Overall Boat of the Year.



Wider 42, Most Innovative New Design.

Twin Disc Express Joystick.



By Jim Flannery

More than three dozen boatbuilders were honored Friday night during the first AIM Marine Group Editor's Choice Awards gala at the W Hotel in Fort Lauderdale.

The awards were among 42 given for individual achievement and for best boats in their categories at the banquet, which benefited Nova Southeastern University's Oceanographic Center in Dania Beach overlooking the Intracoastal Waterway.

"The Editor's Choice Awards were developed to recognize the best of the best in production and semi-custom yachts," AIM Marine Group publisher Gary DeSanctis says. "It is the only event of its kind that honors these builders on a global perspective. Not only was it a spectacular event, but in the process of honoring these top builders in the world we were able to raise a significant amount of money for the Nova Southeastern

University Oceanographic Center. Be sure to mark the event on your calendar for next year."

The Ocean Alexander 120 was named Best Overall Boat of the Year, a 121-foot trideck that Christensen Shipyards engineered and built. The yacht features a full-beam master suite on the main deck and four guest staterooms on the lower deck. Each stateroom has its own private head, media arrays, custom cabinetry and cedar-lined lockers. The company says the yacht's "revolutionary new approach to the helm layout" will be a signature item for future Ocean Alexander motoryachts.

AIM tapped its editorial experts in each category to make the choices. George Sass Jr., the Marine Group's editorial director and editor-in-chief of Power & Motoryacht magazine, says the awards reflect renewed vigor, confidence and innovation among the builders and manufacturers that are displaying at this year's Fort

STEPHEN CRUICKLAND (TOP)

Lauderdale International Boat Show.

"One undeniable trend in the current marine marketplace is that new product is back in force," he says. "Look back to where we were, say, just seven years ago and compare that to where we are today. Walk down any dock or through any tent at this boat show and you'll see innovative products that weren't present not so long ago."

Much of the new product at the show is intended to reduce the barriers to boating and make it safer, more fun and more comfortable, Sass says. "After a significant time in the field testing and evaluating these products, the editors of the AIM Marine Group realized it was time to recognize the innovators and the innovations," he says. "These are the companies that are keeping this industry alive and vibrant. So last summer we implemented a process that allowed our 30 editors from the individual magazines to nominate the best product in categories aligned with the expertise of their individual brands. The nominees were reviewed at length, discussed internally and reviewed against the competitive set."

The decisions were not always easy, but the criteria were clear. "The boat has to be a solid, all-around performer," says Soundings senior reporter Chris Landry, who has tested more than 200 powerboats during his career. "It has to have a smart design and layout, and the construction needs to be detail-oriented and of the highest quality. The ride needs to be smooth, and it has to behave well in all sea conditions. If the boat doesn't execute its mission and purpose, it won't be a top choice of mine."

Of course, a 22-foot bay boat won't perform like a 40-foot express boat or a 110-foot motoryacht, Landry says, but sometimes boats try to do too many things and don't do any of them well enough to meet the highest standards. He says he is impressed by the number of high-quality new boats introduced in the past couple of years. "For consumers, that's a great thing," he says. "It's good to have these builders pushing each other to develop better and better boats."

Additionally, Madame Annette Bénéteau-Roux, former chief executive and president of Groupe Bénéteau and now vice chairperson of its supervisory board, received the AIM Marine Group's Lifetime Achievement Award. Robert C. Arzbaeher, CEO of Actuant Corp., received the Good Samaritan Award.

Bénéteau-Roux, known as the "First Lady of Yachting," is the granddaughter of Benjamin Bénéteau, founder of the French boat-building company. She took charge of the struggling commercial fishing boat builder in 1963 at age 22 and with her brother Andre grew it into a world leader in sailboat and powerboat production. Arzbaeher, who leads a \$1.6 billion diversified industrial company that includes Marincor and Mastervolt, and his 11-person crew rescued six sailors in the Chicago Yacht Club's 2011 Race to Mackinac whose boat had capsized in a violent storm. "To me it wasn't even a

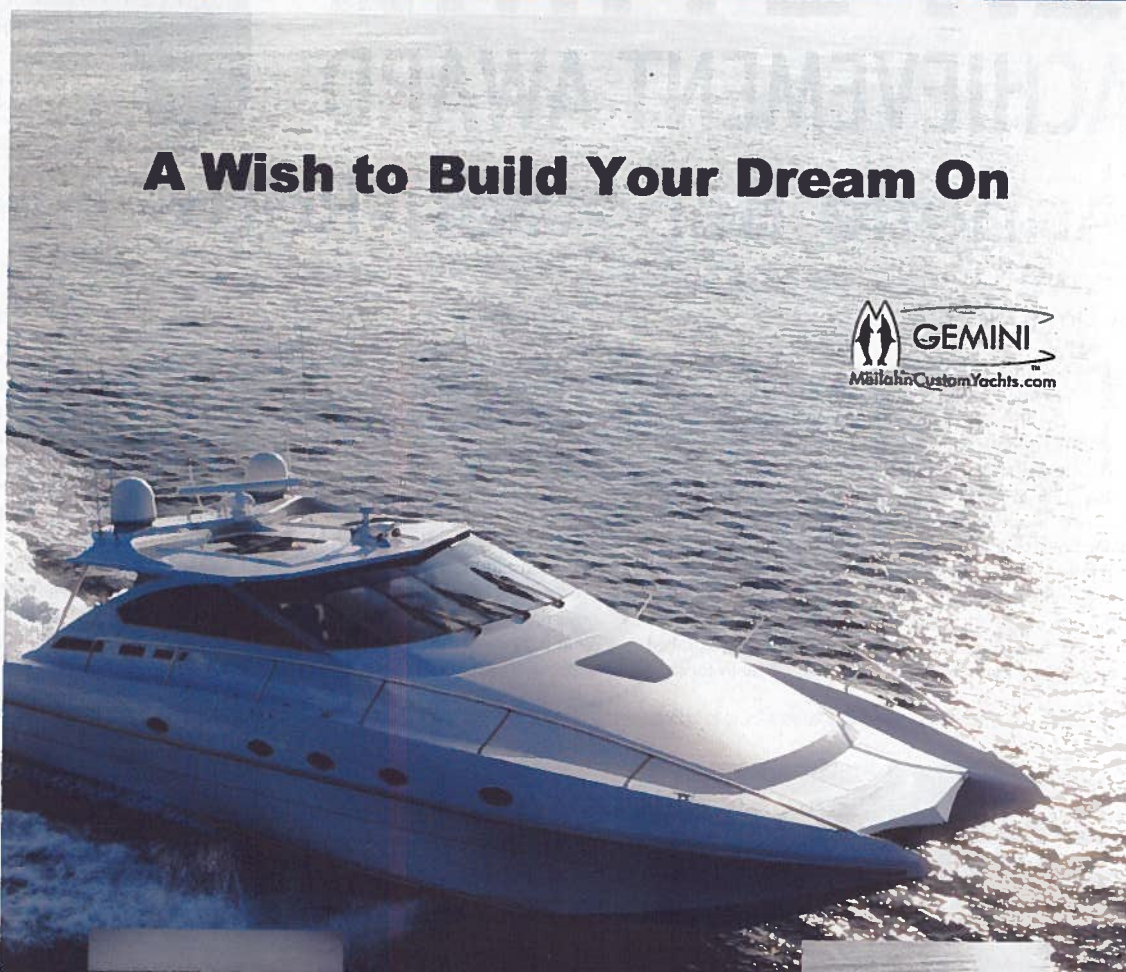
decision — it was a reaction," Arzbaeher later said. (See Page 42 for stories on Bénéteau-Roux and Arzbaeher.)

A donation from the Editor's Choice Awards was made to Nova Southeastern's Oceanographic Center, home of the new 86,000-square-foot Center of Excellence for Coral Reef Ecosystems Research, built on a 10-acre campus next to John U. Lloyd State Park in Dania Beach. It will be the focal point for local, regional, national and international research into coral reefs and the study of solutions for coral reef decline. ■



Greenline 40, AIM Green Award.

A Wish to Build Your Dream On

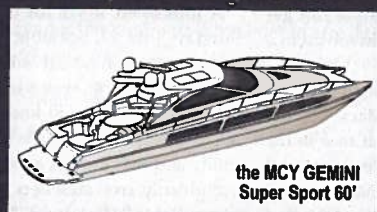


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