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COMPLETE MARINE SERVICE & WATERFRONT LIVING GUIDE

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WHAT'S INSIDE:

Talley's Pier 77

It's My Life!

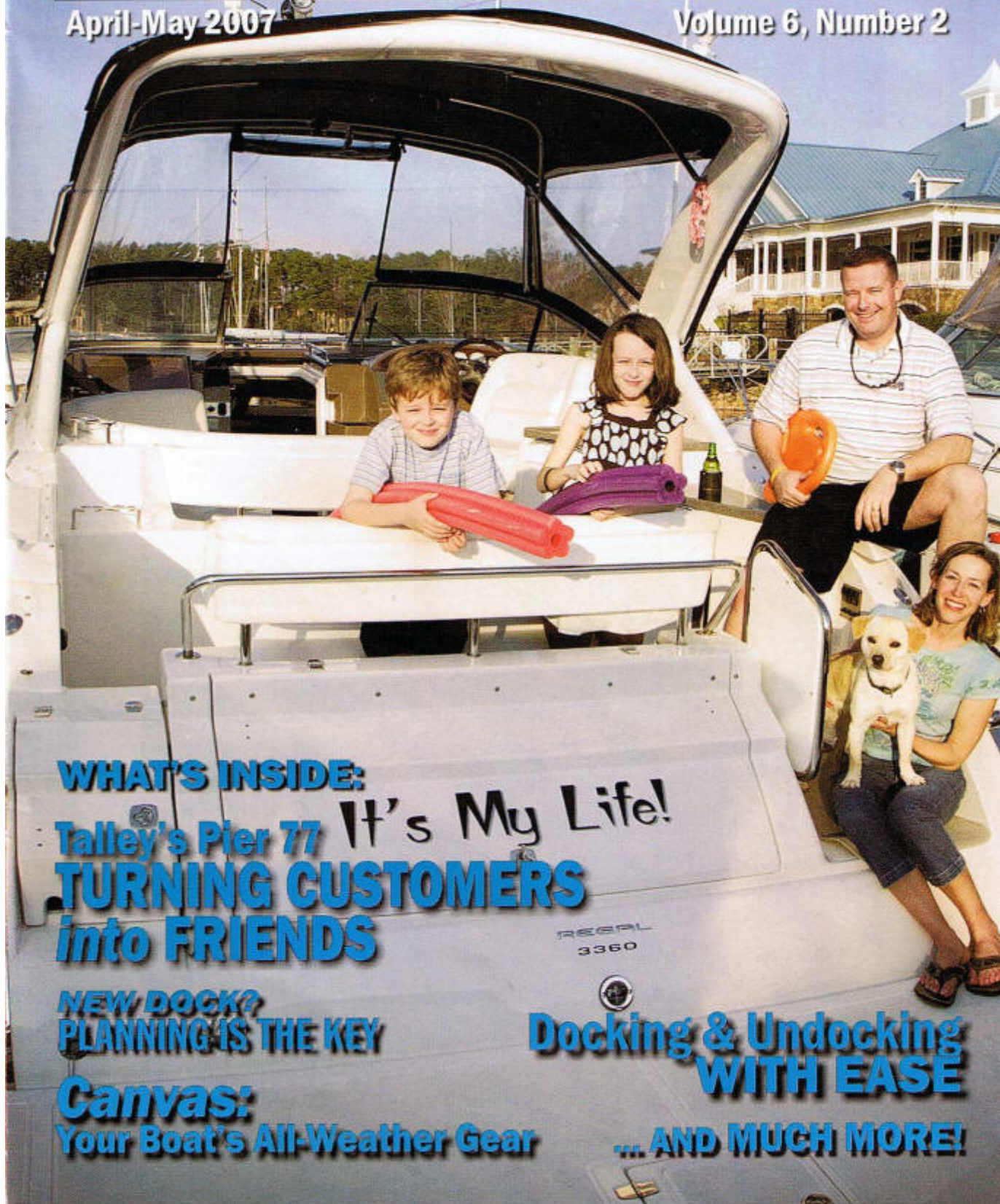
**TURNING CUSTOMERS
into FRIENDS**

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About a year ago, Bill and Beth Shapcott were browsing the booths of the Mid-Atlantic Boat Show in Charlotte.

Bill grew up in a suburb of Philadelphia and spent long summer days sailing on nearby Barnegat Bay in New Jersey. He and Beth, also a Pennsylvanian, met at the beach and shared a deep love for the ocean. They moved south 10 years ago for Beth's job with Bank of America. She's now senior vice president in charge of process design, and Bill is the principal of Northview Elementary School in Statesville.

The Shapcotts had always wanted a house at the beach to enjoy with their growing family – Brett, 10, and Samantha, 8, and their energetic yellow Labrador mix, Comet. However, as they started to enjoy boating with their neighbors in Northstone Country Club in Huntersville, it occurred to them that having a boat on Lake Norman 15 minutes from home might be more fun than a beach house four hours away. Bill was pretty sure of it, but Beth was uncertain. They headed for the boat show.

"We went to the show all three days and asked questions of every dealer," Bill remembers. "On the second day, the last booth we went to was Talley's Pier 77 Marine." While many of the other dealers had shown little interest in helping

Talley's Pier 77 Marine Turning Customers *into Friends*

by Joyce Deaton

them find the boat they wanted, the Talleys were different. "Sara and her son Joey spent an hour and a half showing us all the boats, talking with us and trying to find the boat that would be just right for us," says Bill.

The Shapcotts liked the 2650 better than any boat they'd seen. "It was more open downstairs, and you didn't have to crawl around to get to the aft cabin," says Beth.

Bill remembers leaving the show that night. "Beth said, 'That last boat we were on – with that lady Sara – that's the boat I want.' Sara made her very comfortable stepping into something she wasn't sure she wanted to do."

The Shapcotts' story is typical of customers' experience with Talley's Pier 77 Marine, a family-owned business that prides itself most of all on customer service. Since 1986, Bill and Sara Talley have operated the dealership on Statesville Road near I-77 exit 28. Twin sons Joey and Billy grew up in the business and now split duties in advertising, ordering, demo and delivery, while Sara handles accounting and Bill is president of the firm. The only exclusive



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Photography by Donna Jernigan. www.jerniganphoto.com

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Regal dealer in North Carolina, Talley's Pier 77 is also the largest Regal dealer in the world. With at least one of every Regal model, the Talleys usually carry about 50 boats in inventory. They're dealers for Mercury, MerCruiser and Volvo engines with certified technicians in their service departments at the dealership and at Kings Point Marina.

After selling several brands, the Talleys decided five years ago to become an exclusive Regal dealer. They felt a kinship with Regal in several ways. Regal is also a family-owned business, begun in 1969 by the Kuck family, which has resisted being bought out by competitors and has consistently produced a quality product with the highest standards of integrity and customer service. With manufacturing plants in Orlando, Fla. and Valdosta, Ga., the company builds sport boats, sport cruisers and sport yachts ranging from 19 to 44 feet. A 52-footer, the 5260, is now being designed based on suggestions by owners of the largest current model, the 4460.

Regal's reputation for quality is widely recognized. The company has received the industry's IMTEC award for its FasTrac hull design that saves fuel by providing exceptional performance with lower horsepower. Built originally for Florida's saltwater environment, Regal boats are made of heavier gauge materials and stronger equipment throughout, making them extra-durable for boating anywhere. Color graphics are molded into gel coat, not simply taped on, and upholstery is of the highest-grade marine vinyl. Gauges are hermetically sealed to be fog-free and moisture-resistant and warranted for life. With unique



interlock construction, Regal hulls are solid, tight and quiet. They're so strong they're also backed by a transferable lifetime structural warranty on all models – the best in the industry. Standard features like transom trailering lights, full fiberglass liners, deep cockpits and windshield vents ensure safety.

Bestsellers at Talley's Pier 77 Marine are the Regal Bowriders at 20, 22 and 24 feet, says Sara. And the 2700 Bowrider is a big hit. With a FasTrac hull and deep, comfortable wraparound cockpit seating with a removable table, the 2700 and its companion model, the cuddy cabin 2750, are ideal for socializing.

In addition to quality and innovation, customer service is key for both Regal and Talley's. Regal is winner of the coveted J.D. Power award in both the express cruiser and small runabout categories, the only boat manufacturer to win in two market segments. The company also has received the National Marine Manufacturers Association CSI award for customer satisfaction, and Talley's recently came in first in customer satisfaction among Regal dealers in 45 countries.

"That's really what we're all about," says Sara. "Our goal is complete



customer satisfaction in everything we do – not only in the product we have to offer, but also in the service we perform. Because our customers have chosen a quality product, we believe they appreciate and deserve quality service and satisfaction.” This philosophy has earned the Talleys ardent support

from their customers, many of whom have become fast friends.

Bill Shapcott, for example, has both Joey and Billy’s cell phone numbers programmed into his phone. After the Shapcotts went back to the final day of the boat show and bought a 2650, their involvement with the Talleys took an unusual turn. They loved the boat, but after a few months its MerCruiser engine developed problems that even the factory couldn’t understand. Everything was under warranty, and the Talleys were working on having the engine replaced when the Shapcotts looked around the yard and decided they’d like to have a 3360 instead.

“We’d bought into the Peninsula Yacht Club by then and discovered we really loved living on the boat there on the weekends with our friends,” says Bill. Although the first boat had seemed big enough, experience had shown them that the 3360’s additional three feet of beam would make living aboard much more comfortable. “The Talleys really worked with us to find a deal that would allow us to buy the bigger boat,” says Bill. “They made lemonade out of a lemon.” When Bill said he’d invited a crowd for Beth’s upcoming birthday, the Talleys pulled out all the stops to get the 3360 delivered in time. “I feel like I bought a fine sports car and got real value for my dollar,” says Bill. “Just like with the first boat, Joey took us out on the lake and showed us what every button was for. He made sure we were completely comfortable with everything and was always available if we had questions.”

The Shapcotts love their 3360 and enjoy weekends aboard at the yacht club. With a swimming pool and places for kids to play, the club offers everything they’d have in a beach house. “It’s become our second home,” says Beth. They spend Friday nights at the dock with friends, and Saturday finds Bill waking early to wash the boat. “It’s great therapy, a great way to start the weekend,” he explains. Because of their newfound pleasure – and because Beth is what Bill calls “a serious 1980s Bon Jovi junkie” – they’ve named the 3360 “It’s My Life.”



“I told Sara, ‘We bought the second boat from you guys because of your family,’ and that’s the truth,” he adds. “I deal with salesmen all the time, and they always talk about customer service, but they usually don’t do it. The Talleys are servant salesmen. That’s what they are.” ↴