



Boat storage buildings are ideal sites for solar panels. Below (clockwise) Wade and Kris Eldean; COVID aware celebrations on 4th July; The new building with fire pit during the winter.

with his two sons until they purchased the shipyard.

Wade, a keen sailor by the age of ten, spent his teenage years working different jobs at the marina, including in the boatyard on services such as boat launch, bottom painting, buffing and waxing. A Certified Marina Manager (CMM), he is also an accomplished artist with MFA and MBA degrees. In his current role as president of Eldean's, he manages day-to-day operations and heads up improvement



plans, marketing and long-term planning for the marina.

Today, Eldean's is one of the oldest



Family foundations on the shores of Lake Macatawa

Eldean Shipyard is a multi-award winning Michigan Clean Marina located on the south shore of Lake Macatawa, which joins southern Lake Michigan – one of the largest freshwater lakes in the world. Proudly managed by the Eldean family since 1973, the 313-slip marina offers all modern amenities. Charlotte Niemiec invites marina president, Wade Eldean, to talk shop.

The US state of Michigan has over 1,000 marinas, including more than 600 on the Great Lakes, but few are as large or offer as many amenities and services as Eldean Shipyard.

It began life in 1901 as the Jesiek Brothers Shipyard, which built,

launched and serviced small wooden power boats and sailboats. In 1973, brothers Herb and Roger Eldean purchased it and, over the past 47 years, they have expanded and extensively renovated the property to create the marina it is today. The brothers owe their passion for marinas to their father, who was himself a long-time federal harbour master in Chicago and founder of the state's Monroe Street Harbor, which he ran



active marina and boatyard facilities in the US and its goal "is still the same – to provide customers with first-class service and resort-style amenities," says Wade.

The marina's 313 slips accommodate boats ranging from 12-120ft (3.7m-37m) on fixed docks of treated wood piling and decking, with steel supports. A 168ft (51m) double-sided gas dock is also available to accommodate larger boats – including superyachts – for short-term stays. Each slip has 30 or 50amp power and lighting pedestals, water and a dock box, with subscription-based wireless Internet access.

The shipyard offers ValvTect marine gasoline and ValvTect Premium marine diesel, along with pump-out services. "Our professional staff, with over 250 years of combined experience, are ready to meet the many and varying needs of today's boats," Wade asserts, adding that they have technicians specialising in paint, varnishing, glass fibre, gelcoat, carpentry, restoration, sailboat rigging, electronics, engines, mechanical issues, canvas and upholstery. The shipyard is also an authorised service centre for multiple yacht companies, with 35-ton and 75-ton Marine Travelifts, and a 15-ton hydraulic trailer.

The marina offers a fully stocked ship's store, bathroom and shower facilities located at each end of the marina, a swimming pool and two hot tubs that are elevated to provide a good view of the harbour.

The marina's clubhouse offers TV, ping pong, a small lending library and game collection, while a modern children's playground, multiple picnic areas, a sand volleyball court, fish cleaning station and charter services complete the offering.

Ever popular, the marina is currently at 99.5% occupancy with a waiting list. "For our year-round customers – those who slip with us in the summer and store with us in the winter – we offer such



Eldean Shipyard offers a wide variety of different outdoor spaces, landscaped grounds, and the HarborView Lofts and Events Center (left).

perks as a winter storage discount, free use of the pool house for their special events, slip preference and a gym membership at Fit in 24," Wade confirms.

With some boats permanently onsite, security is in place as a precaution, but is not a deep concern. "With our location at the end of the road, we are off the beaten path and fortunate to have fewer security concerns than other marinas," says Wade. "Our marina slip-holders and guests are issued keys and/or key cards for access to facilities including the bathrooms, laundry, pool, dock carts and the fish cleaning station. Our buildings are secured and include a monitored alarm system through EBC Security."

