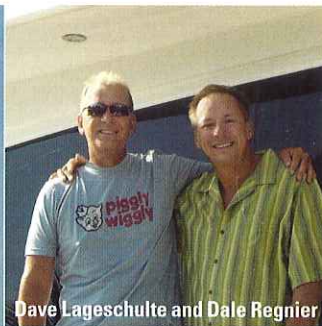


HOOTER PATROL IV

# Fun Patrol

A trio of restaurateurs order their yachting



Dave Lageschulte and Dale Regnier



with a side of laughter aboard *Hooter Patrol IV*.

When Champ, Lags and Eddie start talking about their boating experiences, it doesn't take long until one of them bursts out laughing. "Hey Champ," calls out Eddie, "remember the time you ran aground and out of gas at the same time?"

Champ responds with a sly, crooked grin. "I remember. Except I thought you were driving," he lobs back. "The towboat guy said he'd never seen *that* happen before."

And on it goes, one funny memory after another.

And so it should. After all, Eddie Droste, Dave "Lags" Lageschulte and Dale "Champ" Regnier can be said to have a corner on the fun market. Droste was one of a group of six guys in Clearwater, Florida, who invented the Hooters restaurant chain in 1983, as he says, "just so we could have a place we couldn't get thrown out of."

In 1986, two other buddies, Lageschulte and Regnier, bought the franchise rights to Hooters South Florida. At last count they own more than 25 locations of the now international chain of casual dining and sports bars renowned for cold beer, hot wings and vivacious "nearly world-famous Hooters Girls." The trio has also branched out into other ventures such as Adobe Gila's Margarita Fajita Cantina and the upscale Dan Marino's »



STORY BY MARILYN M. MOWER  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANA JINKINS



Fine Food and Spirits. Separately, their holdings represent an even broader array of restaurants.

Hooters, however, is at the core of their business, their friendship, their fun and their yachting. This summer they took delivery of their fourth jointly owned vessel, aptly named *Hooter Patrol IV*.

So how do three fellows buy and operate boats together and still manage to remain friends?

"You mean, how did we build a Picasso by committee? We've owned boats together for ten or fifteen years," answers Droste, who hails from the same Iowa town as Lageschulte. "We elect a new commodore every morning. That way there's never any debate about our cruising plan."

Aboard *Hooter Patrol IV*, however, cruising plans will be considerably more extensive than in the past. At nearly double the length and triple the volume of her predecessor, a 50-foot sport yacht, the new vessel has range to patrol the Bahamas and Caribbean.

So how does one, or in this case, three, make the jump from a 50-foot production boat to a 97-foot (29.6-meter) custom yacht? Well a man walks into a bar. ...

In this case, the man walking into a bar was Champ Regnier inspecting Hooters in Coconut Grove in 1991. Across the room he spotted Craig Erickson, who quarterbacked the University of Miami Hurricanes to national championships in 1989 and 1990. The two struck up a conversation that turned into a friendship.

"When I was drafted by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in ninety-two, Champ hooked me up with his friend Eddie Droste in Clearwater," says Erickson, "and we became friends, too."



After two seasons with the Bucs and a year with the Indianapolis Colts, Erickson returned to Miami in 1996 as backup quarterback to Dan Marino of the Miami Dolphins. After injuries killed his career in 1999, Erickson considered buying a boat, which is how he found his way to Allied Richard Bertram Marine Group.

"I'd worked as a mate on sportfishing boats as a summer job during college. A couple of times we fished big tournaments in

**Black granite and camphor burl counters and soft Ralph Lauren fabrics contrast with the gloss cherry built-ins furnishing the open-plan salon.**

the Bahamas, and I got a taste for the big boats,” says Erickson. “I ended up getting a job from Allied instead of a boat.”

Meanwhile, as the success of the Hooters restaurants grew, so did the budget for the next *Hooter Patrol*. “We started thinking we’d need a seventy-footer, and we began drawing up ideas on a bar napkin,” recalls Droste. “Then we decided we needed to add about ten feet to get everything in, and we had to go to two napkins.” At this point they called pal Erickson.

“I remembered they had liked the interior of a sixty-eight-foot Hargrave I showed them at a Fort Lauderdale boat show a few years before, but the rest of the boat hadn’t been right for them,” Erickson says. “I thought they should talk to that boat’s designer and explore ideas for a custom yacht.”

“When we sat down with Hargrave’s designer, Ben [Dodarell], we discovered he doesn’t use napkins,” jokes Droste. “We just described our dream boat to him, how we live and how we use our boats, and he captured it.”

The first designs were for an 82-footer, says Hargrave VP of Sales Pete Colagiovanni. When they decided they needed a total of five staterooms, the design grew. Plans in hand, they signed a contract for a 95-footer at the Miami International Boat Show in 2004. Before construction began, however, the owners decided they were going to need more crew. Rather than increase the beam and go back to the drawing board—the builder has hull-mold capability from 20 to 26 feet—the owners chose to add length at the stern for an additional crew berth.

For all their laughing and joking, these owners quietly went about their homework before they chose a builder, checking into quality issues—not just of completed yachts, but of the component parts as well—and having some heart-to-heart talks with Hargrave owners. “Champ really took the lead on that,” says Lageschulte. “From Day One he was the guy who pushed the project along.”

## Hooter Patrol IV exels both as a corporate showplace and a platform for on-water fun.

Regnier notes that what impressed him were the success stories from owners about their Hargrave yachts, and the builder’s willingness to customize to the most minute detail.

“We’ve built a lot of restaurants, and we’ve spent a lot of time on boats, and we know how people congregate,” says Lageschulte. “In the morning, we’re going to hang around the galley having coffee and breakfast, and we need plenty of room for that. During the afternoon, we’re going to be up top, enjoying the sun and the views and Champ’s Jacuzzi. At night, in port, we tend

to gather on the aft deck.” And because *Hooter Patrol IV* is the hottest spot in any marina, all of these spaces have service bars—a feature, Droste gleefully notes, that means they can barhop without having to leave their boat.

From the first napkin, the main deck was envisioned as an open, flowing space that truly supports the owners’ lifestyle, which includes cruising with lots of friends »

**One of the VIP suites, below, and its bath show careful space planning. The full-beam master, bottom left, has makoré wave joinery.**





The center section of the flybridge "hardtop" rolls away when a sun deck is on the menu.

and family and often a bevy of Hooters Girls. All three of the owners like to cook and entertain, thus the open galley arrangement was essential. As the *Hooter Patrol* yachts also figure as platforms for

Hooters Girls calendar photo shoots, the newest addition had to have lots of deck space as well.

Orlando-based Raymond Schaefer of Maverick Architecture & Design, a hospitality-industry design firm that created theme restaurants for the trio and the interior of their new Hooters Casino Hotel Las Vegas, created the yacht's interior scheme in collaboration with Dodarell and Shelley Higgins of Yacht Interiors by Shelley. Gently angling seating at 45 and 90 degrees, the salon and galley offer four cleverly distinct areas in one multifunctional space wrapped in gleaming gloss cherry joinery. Built-in furnishings conceal flat-screen TVs and beverage coolers. Movable bar stools allow access to an otherwise inaccessible space that now holds an extra freezer. The pilothouse on the same level features L-shaped seating and access to a dayhead tucked discreetly away from the main living areas.

As the major shareholder, Lageschulte has a stateroom with its own entrance from the salon that is full beam and more than twice the size of Droste's and Regnier's spacious ensuite staterooms combined. "We fought Lags for every inch," laughs Droste. Stealing a few inches here and there, the design team managed to also work in a guest cabin with upper and lower bunks and a lovely VIP stateroom forward, each with its own bath.

"This is the first boat we've had with crew," comments Lageschulte. "We used to do the driving and the cleaning. Well, Champ did anyway. By the time he got the boat docked, I was usually off buying drinks."

In the spirit of he who laughs last, Regnier just nods in the direction of "his" Jacuzzi on the flying bridge.

When the *Hooter Patrol IV* project began, her owners were single. Last May, Droste married Marsha Posey, a former Hooters calendar girl, at a suitably festive bash on Clearwater Beach. The »

## TECH TALK

# The Big Picture

## Raymarine's New H6 Command Center

Raymarine's new H6 system was tailor-made for the *Hooter Patrol IV* scenario: a compact pilothouse, dual helm stations and a variety of helmsmen. The H6 system can combine navigation, entertainment, and security electronics and controls into one package.

At the heart of the system are twin marine CPUs to protect against single-point failure. Its soul is a visionary software interface that uses perceptual psychology principles to organize navigation data into intuitive modules and in the helmsman's choice of graphic or numeric displays.

The system creates an information-rich environment using a pair of 15-inch CFR46 sunlight-viewable display screens with night vision at each helm. Four programmed modes—Maneuvering, Coastal Piloting, Coastal Passage and Offshore Passage—call up pre-selected combinations of charts, CCTV, radar and instrument data, without the helmsman having to toggle back and forth between menus. The H6 also allows helmsmen to create up to three additional personal information displays.

Scalable windows show data as either digital readouts or graphic representations. For example, the effects of crosscurrents can be shown as two lubber lines on a virtual compass—the compass heading in blue and the COG data in red, as red and blue bars on a histogram, or graphically as an arrow pointing against a hull at the actual angle of the current with knots of leeway indicated. The display preferences of each helmsman are stored in the system and can be called up with one click.

The H6 can also monitor CCTV and control entertainment electronics, but the owners of *HPIV* opted for a completely customized seven-zone entertainment system designed by Michael Robilio of Fort Lauderdale's Concord Marine Electronics.

Crestron controllers access music, cable or satellite TV and radio, or any selection from the 300 videos and 500 CDs stored on servers. There is a standard Fleet 33 satcom aboard, but much of *HPIV's* communication flows through a Wi-Fi hotspot amplifier and an internal wireless network robust enough to support four or five laptops simultaneously. "The hotspot amplifier extends marina Wi-Fi range for several miles. Using a Voice-over-IP system, the owners can surf the Web and make all the calls they want by logging on for ten bucks a day," says Robilio.





yacht was supposed to be part of the festivities, but unforeseeable delays in shipping the boat from its construction yard caused a hasty change in plans.

“Four days before their wedding, the freighter carrying their boat arrived in Fort Lauderdale. Eddie asked if there was any way we

could get the boat around to Clearwater in time for the wedding. Gee, four days to commission a boat and run it around the end of Florida and halfway up the other side,” recalls Hargrave President Mike Joyce. “Just as I was about to say, ‘Sorry,’ Eddie said, ‘Please Mike, it would mean so much to Marsha.’” So Joyce, an admitted romantic, instead heard himself say, “OK.”

Augmenting his service department with an army of subcontractors, Hargrave’s VP and General Manager Mike DiCondina directed a commissioning marathon, working around the clock under improvised floodlights. Within 48 hours, the boat had been inspected, loaded, wired and fueled. With Captain Adam Marani at the helm, *Hooter Patrol IV* set off for Clearwater near her top speed of 21 knots. On board, the installation crew rode along and furiously detailed the interior.

Forty-eight hours after leaving Fort Lauderdale, *Hooter Patrol IV*, horns blaring, came roaring up Clearwater Pass to cheers and tears from the wedding party, then on the beach for the rehearsal dinner. The next day, after the wedding, while a thousand guests danced under a waterfront tent with the yacht moored in the background, Regnier, revealing his own romantic streak, snuck aboard and scattered a trail of rose petals though the salon, down the stairs and into the couple’s stateroom. After all, *Hooter Patrol IV* is all about friendships—and pretty girls. □

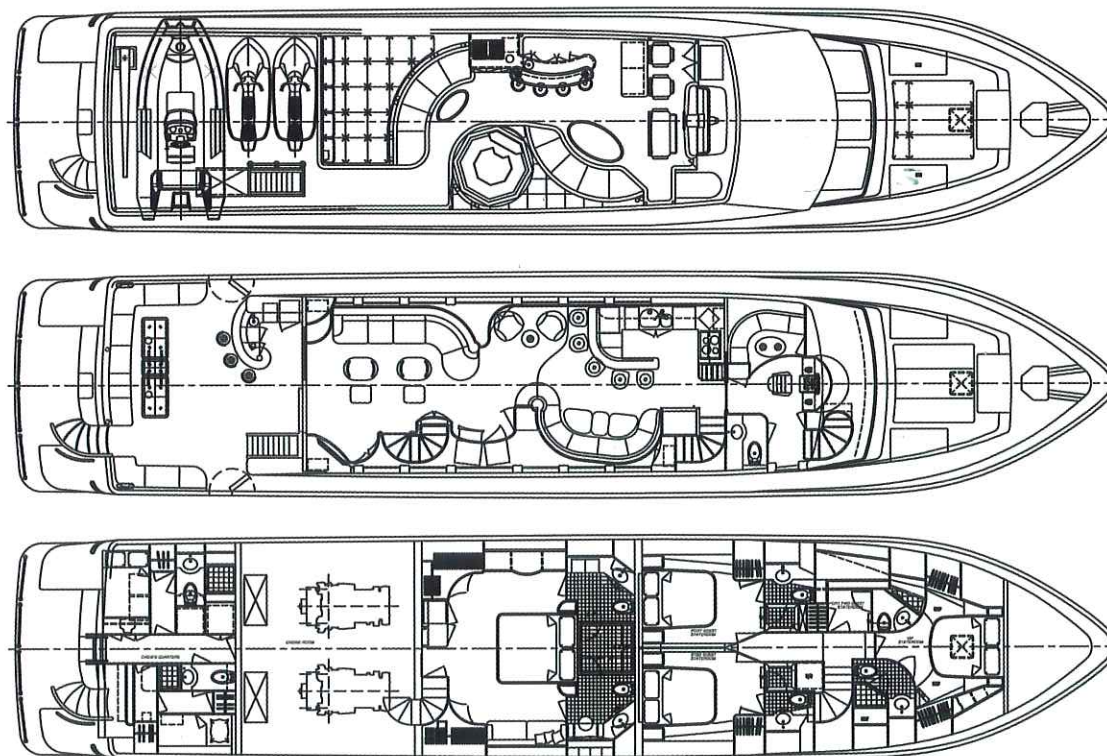
**READER’S RESOURCE** Hargrave Custom Yachts, 1887 West State Road 84, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33315, tel: 954-463-0555, fax: 954-463-8621, www.hargrave.org

**Builder:** Hargrave Custom Yachts  
**Year launched:** 2006  
**Naval architecture:** J.B. Hargrave Yacht Design  
**Interior design:** Yacht Interiors by

Shelley/Raymond Schaefer, Maverick Architecture & Design  
**Exterior styling:** Hargrave Custom Yachts  
**Classification/certification:** ABYC

**LOA:** 97’0” (29.57 m)  
**Beam:** 21’0” (6.40 m)  
**Draft:** 5’9” (1.75 m)  
**Max. displacement:** 100 tn  
**Max. speed:** 21 kn

**Cruising speed:** 18 kn  
**Range at cruising speed:** 405 nm  
**Hull material:** FRP  
**Superstructure material:** FRP  
**Fuel capacity:** 3,000 U.S. gal (11,356 L)  
**Freshwater capacity:** 600 U.S. gal (2,271 L)  
**Engines:** 2x Caterpillar C30, 1,550 hp  
**Reverse gears:** ZF Marine 2050  
**Generators:** 2x 33-kW Northern Lights  
**Air conditioning:** Cruiseair, chilled water, 12 tn  
**Watermakers:** 2x Sea Recovery, 1,800 U.S. gal (6,814 L) per day  
**Stabilizers:** Naiad model 302, 9’ (2.7 m) square fins, MultiSea 2000  
**Bow thruster:** Naiad, 38 hp  
**Hydraulic system:** Hynautic  
**Horns:** Kahlenberg  
**Anchor windlass and capacity:** Maxwell 4000  
**Davits/crane and load capacity:** Quick Lift, 1,600-lb davit  
**Tender:** 16’ (4.9 m) Aquascan Jet  
**Navigation and entertainment system installed by:** Concord Marine Electronics  
**Navigation electronics:** H6 Raymarine  
**Satcom:** KVH, Fleet 33  
**Radar:** H6 Raymarine  
**Depth finder:** Raymarine  
**Wind instruments:** Raymarine



NEW FRONTIERS  
DUBAI & RUSSIA

NOVEMBER  
2006

# ShowBoats

INTERNATIONAL

World Premiere  
**LADY ANNE**  
225' Amels

Fort Lauderdale  
**BOAT SHOW**  
Preview



**Heesen**  
Flies High  
122' G-Force

**Delta's**  
164' Happy Days

**Hargrave's**  
Ultimate Cocktail Cruiser

US \$8.00 CAN \$10.00



WWW.SHOWBOATS.COM  
A CURTCO MEDIA PUBLICATION