



# NMTA Board Elections 2026

## Candidate Bios



### Sam Bisset

*VP of Marketing, Fluid Motion*

I'll be upfront about something. I'm a lifelong PNW native who didn't grow up boating or fishing. I know, I know, but hear me out, because I think that's exactly why I should be here.

Ralph, my wife's late father, introduced me to powerboat cruising around age 18, and it changed my life. Over the past 25 years I've been cruising, fishing, paddling, and sailing whenever I can. Today, adventuring on our Ranger Tug is my family's favorite way to spend time together, and nothing gives me more satisfaction than helping someone else discover that same feeling for the first time.

That's not just a personal passion, it's my profession. As VP of Marketing at Fluid Motion (Ranger Tugs, Cutwater, and Solara Boats), I've spent my career helping people step into this lifestyle. Our brands bring together everyone from young families looking to make the most of every weekend on the water, to sailors crossing over to the powerboat side, to retirees discovering a whole new adventure and community, and everyone in between. Helping people find their way to this lifestyle is what I do every day, and it's exactly what I'd like to do for the NMTA.

Through 13 years of NMTA membership and my work on both the NMTA and NYBA Boat Show Committees, I've seen first-hand the crucial role the NMTA plays, producing one of the best boat shows in the country, supporting marine businesses, growing participation, and protecting our lifestyle from overregulation and burdensome taxation. I believe there's still a real opportunity to reach people who haven't had their Ralph moment yet, and I'd love to help lead that effort.

If Ralph could turn his daughter's non-boating boyfriend into a lifelong enthusiast and professional, imagine what we can do together for the rest of the Pacific Northwest.



### Kelby Brown

*Fournier Insurance*

Growing up on the Seattle waterfront, I learned early that a life on the water is about more than recreation—it's a masterclass in responsibility, perseverance, and presence. Boating has remained a constant in every facet of my life, and my commitment to this industry is both personal and professional.

I am running for the NMTA Board because I believe the boating lifestyle is transformative, and I am dedicated to ensuring it thrives in Washington and beyond. However, our industry faces significant headwinds: increasing regulatory overreach, environmental shifts, a critical labor shortage, and the challenge of engaging a younger, more diverse consumer base.

As a Broker and Risk Advisor, I occupy a unique vantage point within the marine ecosystem. My daily work involves navigating the very issues impacting our members. I partner with marine businesses of all sizes, help yacht owners manage complex exposures, and negotiate with government entities that often lack a fundamental understanding of the maritime world.

I'm running because boating is more than a passion; it is my life's work. I bring a proactive, solution-oriented mindset to the table. In the same way I utilize specialized tools to maximize coverage and mitigate risk for my clients, I will apply that same level of professional advocacy to the NMTA.

On the board, I will shift my focus from micro-advocacy for individual clients to macro-advocacy for our entire industry. I am eager to protect our maritime heritage while steering the NMTA toward a sustainable, high-growth future.



## Nick Graf

*Sales Manager, Aspen Power Catamarans*

It has been an honor to serve as an NMTA board trustee over the past three years. Collaborating with the dedicated staff at NMTA and engaging with members throughout the association has been truly rewarding. I have appreciated the chance to connect with members, understand their needs, and advocate on their behalf.

Aspen and I remain committed to advancing workforce development in Skagit County. I have had the privilege of addressing Juniors and Seniors at Anacortes High School, as well as students enrolled at Core Plus, NCTA, and the SVC Marine Technology Center. Most recently, following the Seattle Boat Show, I facilitated a tour for roughly 40 students at the Aspen lamination & assembly buildings.

Moreover, I have worked to increase awareness among our members and businesses regarding potential policy challenges impacting our industry from Olympia. With your support, I look forward to continuing my involvement in expanding NMTA membership, promoting grow boating initiatives, and assisting our members in achieving success.



## Jason Hanleybrown

*CEO, Marine Floats*

Jason Hanleybrown is the CEO of Marine Floats, a Pacific Northwest builder of commercial marinas for both private and public owners. The company provides a full suite of services including pre-construction planning and permitting, design-build marina construction, and ongoing maintenance and repair—an integrated approach that improves project delivery and long-term asset performance.

Jason has spent over 20 years in construction and the trades, with experience spanning field operations, leadership, and business growth. He holds a Washington State 01 Electrical Administrator license and began his career in finance and corporate roles, including work connected to global port and terminal operations. He brings a practical, operator's perspective to the marine industry—focused on execution, cost control, and getting projects built.

He is particularly focused on helping the industry address rising construction costs, navigate increasingly complex regulatory and permitting environments, and adopt technology and process improvements that reduce friction from concept through completion. He also brings perspective on emerging trends, including increased institutional investment in marina and waterfront assets, and what that means for operators and customers.

Jason has spent much of his life on the water—from years of rowing and sculling to extended time around cruising sailboats. His family has deep ties to boating, including time spent aboard a 40' liveaboard sailboat cruising between Maine and the Florida Keys.

He and his wife of 28 years have three college-aged children and two Bernedoodles.

He is running for the NMTA Board to support industry growth and help ensure the industry can continue to build and maintain infrastructure that is economically viable for the next generation of marina owners.



## Katie Malik

*Marketing Director for EP Carry / PropEle Electric Motors; former GM of Gig Harbor Boat Works*

Boats have been an integral part of my life and my identity ever since childhood. My parents founded Gig Harbor Boat Works in 1986 when I was six years old; I remember doing homework behind boatshow curtains, and hearing day-to-day conversations around the dinner table about the joys and struggles of the small business owner. As I grew up and got more involved, I learned firsthand about balancing the romantic dream of boatbuilding with the practical realities of running a business. Over the two decades I've spent in business management since then, I've seen the challenges of starting and growing a business become ever more complex. In the maritime industry in particular, it can be downright daunting.

That's why I got involved with the NMTA. I started volunteering with the Boatshow Committee in 2023, and in 2025 was appointed to fill a 1-year vacancy on the Board. The more involved I've become, the more I've seen that our industry is stronger when we come together to share our knowledge, pool our resources, and speak with a unified voice about issues that matter to us.

I passionately believe that engaging with the water enriches people's lives, and that we need to grow the boating community in order to grow our businesses. While boating may face a stigma as a "rich man's" hobby, there are numerous affordable and accessible ways to get new folks on the water. Rowing, sailing, paddling, trailerable boats, wooden boatbuilding, youth camps, summer events and "messabouts" are all gateways to a lifestyle on

the water, and they make our communities stronger. I'd be honored to continue serving on the board as a voice and advocate for small boats and small businesses, offering fresh perspectives and ideas to help move the organization and the maritime industry forward.

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## **Steve Thoreson**

*GM, Sun Country Marine Group – Lake Union*

I grew up in a boating family spending my school months in Bellingham on Lake Whatcom and summer months on a Lake at our family home in Minnesota. Boating was very special to me from my earliest memories. Being able to enjoy waterskiing and cruising the water provided a diverse exposure to boating styles. I have owned many types of day boats, ski boats, performance boats, cruisers and sport yachts. This love for boating has stayed with me through my career with allowing me to spend 27 years at Lake Union Sea Ray/Union Marine and then for the past 7 months at Sun Country Marine Group as their new GM of the Seattle Location.

I look forward to serving our NMTA members and helping grow the boating lifestyle for generations to come.