

**The Annapolis Sailboat Show's - Sailing Industry Distinguished Service Award** is intended to honor a recipient who has distinguished him or herself through continued and unselfish service to the overall advancement of the sailing industry.

This year (2017) we present the fourth annual Distinguished Service Award to not one person but two. They will join the small but extremely important group of recipients – Alastair Murray, John Arndt, and Margaret Podlich, all of whom continue to make huge contributions to the sailing both on and off the water.

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The 2017 recipients of the Annapolis Boat Shows Distinguished Service award are Olaf and Peter Harken.

Here are some of the accomplishments that have qualified them for this award:

- Founders of Vanguard Sailboats 1968
- Founders of Harken Yacht Equipment 1968
- Founders of Sail America
- Commodore of the Inland Lake Yachting Association (Olaf) 2003
- Winner of the E Award the US Secretary of Commerce Award for Export Achievement 1992
- Leading supplier to all America's Cup teams since 1992
- Multiple year recipient of Governor of WI Export Achievement Award
- Leading supplier to the US Sailing team and other national teams since 1968
- 2008 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year winners 2008
- SAIL Magazine Industry leadership Award 1994
- Inducted members of the National Sailing Hall of Fame

This story describes what kind of people the Harken's are:

During a very early Sail Expo in cold, windy, wintery Atlantic City the representatives of the sailing industry arrive to transform the cavernous convention center into a welcoming, pleasant place where sailors come to see new products, learn new ideas, commune with one another until sailing weather returns. Met with a total union strike nothing is getting done. From electricity, building booths, placing furniture and carpets, hanging drapes, posting signage, to moving displays, a different union is responsible for each task. Instead they face total shutdown. The public is arriving in days. The story goes that the Harken brothers, with the other organizers, assess the situation and the equipment (like forklifts) standing idle nearby. With a "we can do this" a Harken climbs on a forklift and the transformation of the room begins. Long hours, lots of learning, lots of work, weary and triumphant organizers - the show goes on.

The Harken's have been to every United States Sailboat Show except the first, as accounted for by Olaf in his book "Fun Times in Boats, Blocks, & Business."

*"We decided to go to the second Annapolis show in full force. We got an outside land space for the boats and a tent space for the hardware. With our Pontiac station wagon, we trailered a 470, a Flying Junior, and a 420, plus a big hardware display. Peter's dog, Mac, was traveling with us, as he did on every trip. When we arrived, we were surprised to find all the displays of other exhibitors up and people already in the show. We had the wrong date.*

*Of course, we were the butt of much kidding by our compatriots as we struggled to put up a display and unload all of the boats in the middles of a crowded show very much in progress. The management was not too pleased.*

*The next year we got the dates right, and off we went with our three-boat trailer, our Pontiac wagon, and Mac. We got as far as Gary, Indiana, when the transmission crapped out. We were able to limp along to a Holiday Inn.*

*The next morning we found a transmission-repair shop that would take us right away. Four hundred dollars later we were able to take off. But by now, of course, it was the late afternoon; once again, we arrived at Annapolis a day late. The hooting and cheering did not overcome the displeasure of the show management, who finally forgave us after hearing the story."*

Olaf and Peter Harken are such a huge part of this community that the Boat Shows not only invited them back for the next 47 years, but presented them with this well-deserved award.

Thank you Olaf and Peter for all that you have done for the marine industry!