

Build a boat for a day – or several – at Gig Harbor BoatShop

by Deborah Bach on March 2, 2012 in News, Uncategorized



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Instructor Tom Regan works on lofting with a volunteer at Gig Harbor BoatShop. Photo by Guy Hoppen

Starting tomorrow, Gig Harbor BoatShop will be offering a unique, hands-on way to learn about boatbuilding.

The shop's "Boatbuilder for a Day" series of workshops allow students to help build a classic rowing boat and choose how many sessions they want to attend.

“It’s a chance to build a boat without any of the commitments associated with building your own boat,” said Tom Regan, owner of Grapeview Point Boat Works, who will be teaching the workshop.

That means students can attend sessions to learn specific boatbuilding skills or participate in the project from start to finish. Regan will use a combination of traditional and contemporary techniques to lead students through the building of a classic 15-foot, eight-inch St. George rowing skiff.

Sessions will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays at the boatshop, located at the historic Eddon Boatyard on the Gig Harbor waterfront. The cost is \$45 per session for members and \$50 for non-members. Up to six people can participate in any session, and all tools and materials will be provided.

The goal is to finish the boat in time for Port Townsend’s Wooden Boat Festival in September. It will be put up for sale, with proceeds going to support Gig Harbor BoatShop’s programs and projects. The nonprofit organization, which is in its third year of operations, offers classes on topics such as navigation, decorative knots, leathering oars and spars and making wood cleats.

Guy Hoppen, the boatshop’s president and founding director, said the idea for the boatbuilding workshop came from a similar one held by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in Maryland. He said to his knowledge, there isn’t anything like it being offered elsewhere in the Northwest.

“It’s really designed for people to just show up for whatever process of the boatbuilding they think they might be interested in,” he said. “You can come once, come twice or come however many times you want to. It’s boatbuilding for a day.”

Additional information and registration is available on the boatshop’s [website](#).

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