



Where Michigan Lawyers Work

On St. Clair shores

*By Naseem Stecker
Photography by Carrie Pickett*



From left to right, the Danielson Group: A. Phillip Easter, Sandy Bousum, Gary Danielson, and Michael Kaysserian.

Gary Danielson and his wife, Sue, designed the *Hemisphere Dancer* (with some help from a naval architect) because they could not find a commercial model that fit their needs—to combine a vessel that could serve as an office as well as a cruising ship. Custom-made by a builder in Florida for \$300,000, the boat will one day fulfill the Danielsons' dream to traverse the Amazon River. In the meantime, they've sailed all along the East Coast and on the Great Lakes.

Through a licensing agreement with the builder, the couple is receiving \$3,000 per boat on any other boat the manufacturer sells. "It turned out that there was a big niche for a boat like this," Danielson said. "It's a unique boat that has a 4,000-mile range. Most of the powerboats in here have a 200 to 300 mile range. With a 4,000-mile range you can cross oceans. It's very unusual for a powerboat."

A comfortable space, reminiscent of a New England cottage, greets visitors as they enter the main saloon, or living room, of the *Hemisphere Dancer*. A settee serves as a conference center. A starboard table functions as the work station for fellow attorney A. Phillip Easter. A few steps down from the saloon area is a small state room where secretary Sandy Bousum has all the office equipment she needs to conduct business. Her work area also functions as an extra guest bedroom.

HEMISPHERE DANCER

DETROIT

Who:

Gary Danielson, the Danielson Group, P.C.

Where:

27735 Jefferson Avenue, St. Clair Shores

What you see:

A powerboat more formally known as a Great Harbor 37. Avid sailor Gary Danielson, who has crossed the North Atlantic solo, specializes in labor law and has made the boat the floating headquarters of his firm. Berthed next to the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club at the Jefferson Beach Marina, the 37-foot-long fiberglass trawler is christened *Hemisphere Dancer*.

The galley, or kitchen, which is just across from the state room, is equipped with a three-burner propane stove with an oven, a microwave, an under-counter refrigerator, as well as all shapes and sizes of lockers, drawers, and pantry bins. The master bedroom has a full-sized bed with abundant storage throughout the cabin. Danielson's work area is in the pilothouse, which is five steps up from the saloon. "I get the smallest space but the better view," Danielson said. "I can watch the sun rise over the lake in the morning. The views are spectacular."

The clients love it too. The firm has even attracted some new clientele through cocktail party banter about their boat. "Since we've been on the boat, clients come every single week now, especially on Friday afternoons around lunch time. It's a nicer environment; we can conduct business and still have some fun," Danielson added.

Is there a downside? Cost is a factor because it's more expensive than being in a regular office building. "Compared to the office that we were in before we came here, we're paying about a 30 percent premium to be on a boat," Danielson disclosed. Also, winter can be a dreary time when the boat is moored for three months under a protective shed. Still, for true blue boaters, the positives outweigh all these considerations. "Being able to come to the marina every day is the best of all worlds," Danielson said. ♦

Naseem Stecker is a staff writer for the Michigan Bar Journal.



Work station in the main saloon. The use of CD Roms has made it possible for the firm to store large amounts of information on board.

Next month we'll feature a historic mansion which has been converted into an elegant downtown Detroit law office.