



WAKE THE LAKE

They say the purpose of life is, a life of purpose. One local legend's purpose was celebrated loudly over Geneva Lake's waters on September 30, 2012.

In the pre-dawn moonlight, 39 wooden Streblov boats gathered on Fontana's shores. There, as a harvest moon set in the west, and an October sun rose to the east, a bluebird day formed and we lined up — one final tribute to the man who had created these boats. There seemed no better memorial, or wake, for Randy Streblov, the late boat builder and legend behind the boat, than to "Wake the Lake."

Streblov, known by many as the man who put the contemporary wooden boat signature on Geneva Lake, created an icon here. More than 100 of his family's luxury, custom-made handcrafted wooden mahogany boats live on these waters. A family business, Randy Streblov's father Larry started the small boat shop in the 1950s and Randy took over in later years. Randy was not only known for his meticulous boat building skills, but also simply for the guy he was — a man devoted to his life's purpose and always, everybody's friend.

"We all knew his ready smile, his warm 'How ya doin,' always with a recollection of when he last saw you and a question to show he cared about you," said Larry Larkin, friend and fellow boat builder.

On that morning, the impromptu plan was a slow, 15 mph cruise to Black Point in unison as a memorial for Randy. Led by the Water Safety Patrol and the Streblov family, the boats reached the Black Point marker, yet, instead of turning around, all engines intuitively opened up, and the storm of Streblovs barreled down the lake to Geneva bay. The waters churned from shore to shore, engines growled in a loud roar at dawn — a final ride for Randy. Over six miles of early morning water, Randy's beloved "Streblovs" truly woke the lake.

"He loved the exhilaration that he felt when he pushed the throttles forward and felt the boat accelerate and push him back in his seat," said Larkin. "He loved the roar of the engines and the response of the boat."



It was the perfect nod to Randy, an anchor of our community. Each community is a tapestry woven by its place — for us, these deep sparkling waters, and by the people who make their mark on it.

Today, the family boat business legacy continues at the Fontana shop — with Randy's daughter Kris Streblov, Steve Horton and their team. According to Larkin, it gave Randy great comfort to know the family business would continue to grow for another generation with the same high standards.

"It was a very emotional, wonderful honor for my father," said Kris Streblov, who rode in Randy's "Eldo" 1969 boat. The family plans to hold a more organized memorial this coming spring.