



# The Jupiter Courier

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

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# Bahamian boat-building tradition comes to U.S.

By Jennifer Brannock  
Staff Writer

They began as outcasts from the New World on a sandy beach in the Bahamas' Abaco islands.

Heaved from their homeland and resettled miles into the ocean, the Albury family was forced to make ends meet on the impoverished island of Man-O-War Cay.

Like numerous British loyalist families after the Revolutionary War in the late 1700s, the Alburys settled in the Bahamas and had no success in producing American cash crops, such as cotton and tobacco. With few other options, they set their sights on boat manufacturing.

Now, more than 200 years later, Jupiter resident Jeff Lichterman wants to make sure the Albury family's quality boat-making tradition continues.

Lichterman began his new business, PowerBoats, this year. He is dedicated to constructing high-quality, durable boats by hand, just as the Albury family continues to do today.

"It's important for me to let the public know that we're doing things exactly

the same as they did," he says. "We're not cutting any corners, and we're building each by hand."

Visitors to Man-O-War Cay today can still witness a piece of history in action. Willard Albury is carrying on the tradition of crafting boats that was begun by his ancestors.

"People still go to Abaco to watch him build the boats," Lichterman says. "They're built all by hand, one at a time. There's nothing production-oriented about it."

Up until 1985, the Alburys made wooden boats. Willard Albury and his sons now produce 23-foot fiberglass boats valued at \$28,000 apiece, which are the type being produced by Lichterman in the United States.

Due to the amount of time and precision dedicated to each boat, Albury and his family only construct about one boat per month, and have a long waiting list of clients.

Lichterman and his builders plan to make up to three per month.

"It's not going to be a mass production boat," he says. "It'll still be exclusive. We hope to continue the waiting list tradition."



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Jupiter resident Jeff Lichterman built this boat, based on designs of the legendary Albury family boat-makers in the Bahamas.

Lichterman approached the Alburys in February and bought the rights to make copies of the family's boats in Florida. He will pay the family royalties on every boat he sells, he says.

"People from here rent their boats in the islands and

fall in love with the ride," Lichterman says. "(Albury boats) are so hard to come by, because very few are sold. They become like one of the family for buyers."

Lichterman says he got the idea to construct Albury Brothers boats after taking

numerous trips to the Abaco islands.

"I'd stand there and watch them build these classic boats with such TLC," he says. "I always wanted one for myself, but I could never get on the waiting list."

Lichterman has hired four

boat builders to help him construct the detailed boats.

"I spent a lot of time finding the best builders out there," he says.

Steve Kerezman joined Lichterman on the project after working for the Rybovich boat company for 11 years. He just helped the group finish construction on its first boat.

"I like it, because it's one of the nicest, custom-built 23-foot boats I've ever seen," Kerezman says. "They're unique in design and quality of production, and they're very user-friendly."

Lichterman says the Albury boats are for sea-savvy boat captains who will truly appreciate the craftsmanship of the boat.

"People who want a boat that is low-maintenance, is a great ride and will understand how strong a boat it is will buy them," he says.

For more information on the Albury Brothers boats, or PowerBoats, call 863-7006, or visit them online at [www.alburybrothers.com](http://www.alburybrothers.com), or [www.powerdealsonpowerboats.com](http://www.powerdealsonpowerboats.com).

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