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## NEWS RELEASE

### **Fraser Shipyards Briefs Rep. David Obey, D.-Wis.**

*Federal funds will help add jobs, improve facilities for future work*

*SUPERIOR, WIS., Feb. 16, 2010* – Fraser Shipyards Inc. President and COO Jim Korthals today briefed Rep. David Obey, D.-Wis., on how the shipyard will use the \$2 million the congressman secured for the City of Superior to assist with the shipyard's continued upgrades and repairs to its facilities. The company will initiate the work as soon as funding is disbursed, ultimately employing an additional 15 to 20 skilled workers throughout the project.

"This project will help ensure Fraser remains competitive, so it can continue to employ people long into the future," said Obey. "This is a great example of private industry working cooperatively with government at every level, federal, state and local." Obey and Sen. Herb Kohl, D-Wis., announced in December 2009 that the funding had been secured and is part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act signed into law by President Obama. The funding is part of the federal budget for the U.S. Department of Transportation.

"The money will help fund Fraser's continued commitment to the maritime community," said Korthals. "We're grateful Rep. Obey was able to help secure this significant funding at this time. It will give us the opportunity to bring on skilled trades people, electricians and heavy equipment operators to get the job done." Fraser Shipyards will

- repair approximately 420 ft of one of the dock wall faces in the shipyard that is used in repairing Great Lakes vessels and
- repair and upgrade the electrical services within the shipyard.

Workers will install 50-ft lengths of sheet piling to repair the dock walls, using a crane and vibrating hammer to move the piling and interlock the sheets into place. Caps will be welded onto the sheet piles to permanently tie them together. The double-wall system used keeps earth from sloughing into the lake.

The company will also install higher-efficiency transformers to better suit the shipyard's needs. The current transformers are costly as the electricity comes in at 14,000 watts and has to be transformed down as far as 110 watts for use. The change will save the company money each and every day, further improving its bottom line.

Fraser Shipyards also will use the funds to improve the electrical service that extends to where the boats park, as the current underground lines are beyond their useful life and are being affected by heaving ground. The new lines will be protected and more reliable for Fraser Shipyards' customers.

Work is expected to be performed simultaneously and completed within a two- to three-month period once the funding is received.

Last March \$3.7 million in funding for the shipyard was secured through the State Harbor Assistance Program, administered by the City of Superior, with a required 20 percent match from Fraser. That funding will be allocated to new construction work, while the \$2 million in federal funds will go towards repairs.

Korthals also introduced Fraser Shipyards' newest acquisition – Lake Assault Boats – that will help the company add even more new jobs above and beyond the shipyard work. “Acquiring Lake Assault Boats is a natural extension of what we do best,” said Korthals. “We perform quality work on ships and will apply that experience to patrol, fire and rescue boats as well as hunting and fishing boats. Dependability is key, and our welders are the best in the business, so our customers can expect a top-of-the-line product. The more we can expand Lake Assault Boats, the more workers we can employ.”

Lake Assault Boats has 58 customers in 13 states. One of the company's most recent jobs was producing a rescue craft for the Chicago Fire Department. For more on Lake Assault Boats, go to [www.lakeassault.com](http://www.lakeassault.com).

### **About Fraser Shipyards**

Serving western Lake Superior since 1890, Superior, Wis.-based Fraser Shipyards offers a broad range of shipyard services for Great Lakes freighters, cement vessels, tugs and barges. Its engineering division, Northern Engineering Co., established in 1916, performs inside and outside marine machine shop work. For more information, visit [www.fraser shipyards.com](http://www.fraser shipyards.com).

Fraser Shipyards is a subsidiary of Reuben Johnson & Son Inc., which was founded in Superior in 1956. Reuben Johnson & Son is a diverse, multimillion-dollar firm with eight affiliates, including RJS Construction Group LLC, Johnson Materials Co., RJS Real Estate Group, Energy Systems Co., Chris Jensen & Son Co. Inc., Charter Films Inc., Fraser Shipyards and Northern Engineering Co. For more information, visit [www.rjs5300.com](http://www.rjs5300.com).

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## Speaker Biographies

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**Rep. David Obey, D-Wis.** is Wisconsin's 7th District Congressman. He grew up in Wausau and graduated from Wausau High School. Obey holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He served three terms in the Wisconsin state assembly before being elected in 1969 as a Democrat to the 91st Congress to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Rep. Melvin R. Laird. Obey has been re-elected to the 20 succeeding Congresses.

Rep. Obey's working class background and progressive values drive his work in Congress. He strongly supports increased investments in education, health care and job training, fights to protect the rights of workers, promotes reform to make government responsive to the people, and advocates for tax cuts that benefit all Americans, not just the well off.

Obey now serves as the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, which makes spending decisions for every Federal discretionary program. As the chairman of the committee, Obey spearheads efforts to invest in education; expand access to quality, affordable health care; protect the environment; and strengthen homeland security. His leadership position on the committee allows him to sit on each of its 12 subcommittees, which are responsible for producing the annual "must-pass" spending bills.

Obey has been recognized by numerous Wisconsin and national organizations for his work, including the National Association of Community Health Centers, National Farmers Union, National Mental Health Association, 7th Congressional District AFL-CIO, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, National Council of Senior Citizens, Vietnam Veterans of America, Wilderness Society, and Common Cause. For more on Rep. Obey, visit [www.obey.house.gov](http://www.obey.house.gov).

**James Korthals** is president and chief operating officer of Superior, Wis.-based Fraser Shipyards. He oversees daily operations and is responsible for shaping company culture in preparation for even greater growth. He joined Fraser in December 2007 from Cutler Magner Co. of Duluth, Minn., where he served as chief executive officer and chairman of the board of the lime and salt products manufacturer. Korthals has more than 25 years' experience managing the operations and production of large manufacturing facilities and mining companies across the country. He also served as a Great Lakes Port Facility Manager in Michigan. Korthals holds a bachelor of science degree in engineering from Michigan Technological University. He serves on the board of Charter Films, the board of the Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra and was recently elected to the board of the National Bank of Commerce. He may be reached at [jkorthals@frasershipyards.com](mailto:jkorthals@frasershipyards.com).

**Jason Serck** is the planning and port director for the City of Superior, Wis. He has worked for the City of Superior for almost nine years, including six years as director. He handles port issues and plays a significant role in economic development and redevelopment within the city. He is in charge of the City's comprehensive and land use planning, zoning, historic preservation and community development block grant program. Serck is also the current president of the Wisconsin Commercial Ports Association and the City's facilitator for the State of Wisconsin's Harbor Assistance Grant program, which has contributed \$10 million-plus for dockwall improvements throughout the Superior Harbor. Serck has a bachelor's degree in public administration from the University of Northern Iowa and holds a master's degree in urban and regional planning from the University of Iowa. He may be reached at [serckj@ci.superior.wi.us](mailto:serckj@ci.superior.wi.us).



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# Fraser Shipyards Inc. Profile

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**Founded** – 1890 by Alexander McDougall

**Current owner** – Superior, Wis.-based Reuben Johnson & Son Inc., which purchased the company in 1977. Reuben Johnson & Son is a diverse, multimillion-dollar firm with eight affiliates, including RJS Construction Group LLC, Johnson Materials Co., RJS Real Estate Group, Energy Systems Co., Chris Jensen & Son Co. Inc., Charter Films Inc., Fraser Shipyards and Northern Engineering Co. For more information, visit [www.rjs5300.com](http://www.rjs5300.com)

**Services provided** – Broad range of services and capabilities to keep Great Lakes freighters, cement vessels, tugs, and barges operating in shipshape condition. Engineering division, Northern Engineering Co., performs inside and outside marine machine shop work.

- New construction
- Underwater and topside repairs
- Floating repairs
- Vessel lengthening
- Boiler repair and reconstruction
- Repowering
- Propulsion system repairs (steam- and oil-fired)
- Hull work
- Insurance inspections
- Coast Guard certifications
- Marine surveys
- Self-unloader conversions
- Automation
- General fit out

**Facilities and equipment** – 60-acre facility provides 24-hour security, featuring building and repair berths, a joiner shop and mold loft, machine and fabricating shops, warehouse facilities, two fully working dry docks, lay-up and fit-out berths.

- **Heavy-lift cranes.** Six heavy-lift cranes with capacities ranging from 35 to 300 tons. All cranes either rough-terrain or crawler-type configurations, capable of working in the shipyards or throughout the Twin Ports harbor area.
- **Shop equipment.** Complete, modern burning and welding equipment, 32' plate rolls, a hydraulic press brake, and plate and ironworker shears. Also a pipe shop, paint shop, electric shop, mold loft, and warehouse.
- **Floating repair equipment.** Repair launches, crane scows, tugs, and rudder floats available for repairs away from shipyard.

**Recent repair and improvement funding** –

- In December 2009, \$2 million in funding announced for City of Superior to assist with Fraser Shipyards' continued upgrades and repairs to its facilities. Funding is part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act and is part of U.S. Department of Transportation budget.
- In March 2009, \$3.7 million for new construction projects secured through State Harbor Assistance Program, administered by the City of Superior, with a required 20 percent match from Fraser.

**Newest acquisition** – In December 2009, Fraser Shipyards acquired Custom Assault Boats, which manufactures heavy-duty boats for patrol, fire, rescue, dive, duck hunting, Great Lakes sailing and fishing, small lake fishing, and work.

**President and COO** – Jim Korthals, [jkorthals@frasershipyards.com](mailto:jkorthals@frasershipyards.com)



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# Lake Assault Boats Profile

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**Founded by Jerry Atherton** – 2003

**Acquired by Fraser Shipyards** – December 2009

## Company mission

- Provide extraordinary custom boat building services for fishing, work, fire, rescue, law enforcement and federal agency markets.
- Provide a safe, clean working environment and install pride in workmanship, quality and creativity.
- Contribute to the community through job creation, civic participation and community service.
- Make a return on investment that will reward shareholders and provide capital for future growth.

**Various functions of company's heavy-duty boats** – patrol, fire, rescue, dive, duck hunting, Great Lakes sailing and fishing, small lake fishing, and work

**Range in size of boats** – 14' to 35'

**Number of customers** – 58 in 13 states

**Number of employees** – 6

**Number of boats built since founding** – 58

**Located** – Fraser Shipyards, Superior, Wis.

**President and COO** – Jim Korthals, [jkorthals@frasershipyards.com](mailto:jkorthals@frasershipyards.com)



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