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Pat Healey Inducted into IGFA Fishing Hall of Fame

NEW GRETNA, N.J. (Sept. 2, 2026) - Patrick J. Healey, President and CEO of Viking Yacht Company, was inducted into the International Game Fish Association (IGFA) Fishing Hall of Fame on Aug. 29 at Johnny Morris' Wonders of Wildlife National Museum & Aquarium in Springfield, Missouri. Healey joined Roy W. Cronacher Jr., Tom Davidson, Capt. Ralph Delph and Capt. Jose Wejebe in the 2026 class.

"I never, ever in my wildest dreams thought this would happen," Healey told an audience of 125. "It's just an incredible, incredible honor to be standing here in front of all of you tonight and to be inducted into this Hall of Fame."

IGFA calls the Fishing Hall of Fame its pinnacle award. Healey is now among a group that includes Ernest Hemingway, Zane Grey, Ted Williams, former President George H.W. Bush, Bill Dance, Lee and Joan Wulff, Flip Pallot and Curt Gowdy.

"It would be easy to induct Pat Healey on the strength of what Viking has meant to this sport, but his impact reaches far beyond that. A three-time International Masters champion and a champion for conservation, he has left an indelible mark on the world of sportfishing," said Jason Schratwieser, IGFA President. "The IGFA Fishing Hall of Fame is the highest honor in our sport, and we are proud to welcome Pat into this distinguished group of individuals."

The induction follows a strong run of recognition. Healey received the Center for Sportfishing Policy's Eddie Smith Manufacturer of the Year Award in 2024 and IGFA's Gil Keech Heavy-Tackle Award in 2025. Earlier this year, *Marlin* magazine honored him as its inaugural Person of the Year.

Healey's remarks were personal and filled with stories from more than four decades of fishing and boatbuilding. He recalled early tournament days, including getting fired by his father, Viking Co-Founder Bill Healey, after returning late to work following a Virginia Beach tournament win, and repeatedly thanked the captains, boatbuilders, dealers, owners and family members who helped him along the way. "I only know how to do two things, build boats and go fishing," Healey said.

Fishing Viking's demo boats gave the company direct feedback from captains and owners. Healey called the captains the "lifeblood" of the program and recalled sitting with them on dock boxes and asking, "How can we build a better boat?"

Drew McDowell, a longtime Viking demo captain, has been part of the program since its early years. "I have been very fortunate to fish with you for 43 years, as your captain when we first started and then the last 20 years together as anglers in the cockpit," McDowell said. "You have brought many great ideas to our sport and have always put conservation of the fish as No. 1."

Healey's eldest son, Sean Healey, focused on his father's drive and used a nickname familiar to tournament crews. "Left Flat Pat" comes from the cockpit position Healey has fished for years.

"Congratulations, Dad. You've always been persistent, always pushing forward and looking for a better way," Sean said. "And yes, 'Left Flat Pat' is officially a Hall of Famer. We're all very proud of you."

Before Healey took the stage, an IGFA-produced video traced his career from Viking's first demo boat, a 41-footer at the White Marlin Open, through more than four decades of tournament fishing. It also covered his involvement in the International Masters Angling Tournament, his role in developing more than 80 Viking models since 1996 and his work on behalf of fishing and the marine industry.

Healey said Viking's demo program has released more than 15,000 billfish over more than 40 years while harvesting only 15. "We can do more together," Healey said. "We're the stewards of this industry."

Each Hall of Fame inductee also has a display case with artifacts tied to his or her life in fishing. Healey's includes 3D-printed models of a Viking and a Valhalla, a 3D-printed Best of Show trophy, his signature Viking visor, a photo collage and a 2011 Master Angler patch.

About Viking Yacht Company

Founded in 1964 by brothers Bill and Bob Healey, Viking Yacht Company grew from humble New Jersey boatbuilding roots into a world leader in semi-custom fiberglass sportfishing yachts. Today, with more than 6,000 boats delivered, Viking builds premium sportfishing yachts, while Valhalla Boatworks carries the Viking bloodline into high-performance outboard-powered center consoles and sport yachts.

With nearly 1 million square feet of manufacturing space between its New Gretna and Mullica, New Jersey, facilities, Viking continues its family-owned mission: building a better boat every day.

Viking Yachts is part of the Viking Marine Group, a vertically integrated family of seven companies: Viking Yachts, Valhalla Boatworks, Valhalla Yacht Sales, Atlantic Marine Electronics, Viking Yacht Service Center, Palm Beach Towers and Viking Yachting Center.

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