

I have always loved being on the water. Ever since I was a kid, I have been drawn to it. We used to live on a small Lake in Wisconsin, and boating was one of our biggest pastimes. Sometimes, I would get to go on serene morning rows with my father. Other times, a few of us would go fishing in the evening. My favorite adventure, however, was taking out the big party boat with all of my friends and family. The party boat is what we called the pontoon boat. It was a typical floating porch, about 30 feet long and almost as wide. Although it was a big boat by any standards, when I was a kid it looked huge.

Our boat parties were legendary within our social circle. We would motor out to the middle of the lake, moor the boat, and spend the afternoon just hanging out and eating delicious food. My dad was a great barbecue chef, and there would always be good eating on that party boat. We would dive into the water, swim around, lay in the sun, or just hang out and talk.

It was the joy that I got out of those childhood pontoon party boat excursions that inspired me to start my own charter service. Party boats were hardly a typical career occupation in my family. Quite to the contrary, most of my relatives were professionals. We had quite a few doctors, lawyers, business people, and other serious white collar types. Starting a private boat charter service was something that was almost unprecedented in our family. No one had ever done anything like it before.

Still, my parents were proud when they saw that I intended to follow through. I spent a couple years working in a sunset cruise boat tour, getting some experience of the business and saving up enough money to buy my own party pontoon boat. Initially, my party boat was a pretty low cost affair. It wasn't as luxurious as some of the other cruises, so I catered to people who wanted a more budget conscious trip. I made sure that people always had a good time on my boat tours, and so I was making pretty good money at it. Soon I saved up enough to buy another boat, and soon I had a third one. Nowadays, business is going pretty well, and I get to spend most of my time on the water, doing what I love.