Anchors Aweigh for Family Unity

At 19 feet, boldly dressed in deep sky blue and white, Lady Jane presents a striking image. She's great fun, too, on Indiana's lakes. But floating and water skiing are this boat's secondary purposes. Her most important task is providing opportunities for the Rulon family to enjoy time together.

"Our value structure is faith, family, and farm, in that order," says Kenneth Rulon, parent with his wife, Jane, of two teenage daughters, Jennifer and Kathryn. The idea for the boat came during a "family powwow" a couple of years ago, when everyone listed the top 10 things they'd like to see and do in North America. "Everyone did their list independently, and when we came back together, a boat was number one for Jane and the girls and number two for me."

Lady Jane joined the family last June. "We all went shopping to buy it after listing all the features and benefits we wanted. We include everyone in these things," Rulon says. Sixteen times that first summer, they were on the water together. "We can be skiing within 21 minutes of home," he says. It's a new sport for them, and "all four of us are in various stages of learning," Rulon says. "For me, it's easier to fall than it used to be, and it seems to hurt a little longer."

Besides being a vessel for family togetherness, the Lady Jane provides a break for these high-achievers in school and work. "Once you get into the boat, you leave the world at the dock," Rulon says. "You don't have peer pressure. You can turn off the cell phones. And it's a good family getaway."

1982 B.S., Agricultural Economics Purdue University
1982-1991 Marketing specialist, plastics industry
1991-present Rulon Enterprises, Cicero, Indiana, (overseeing financial planning, accounting, risk management, marketing, corn planting, and field harvest operations for 5,000-acre family farm business)
1992 Co-founded peer review group of 11 large Indiana families operating more than 57,000 acres
1993 Named Top Marketer by Top Producer magazine
“The life-long benefit of my time at Purdue was learning how to ask questions, critically evaluate the answers, and think about how to best apply the conclusion to our farm business.”