

Boating Writers International to Host Forum On the Future of the Marine Industry

With the recreational boating industry suffering its deepest recession in memory, journalists who cover the industry for a living have a vested interest in and a boatload of ideas regarding what needs to be done if the industry hopes to do more than just limp along as the country emerges from the Great Recession. To kick-start the conversation, Boating Writers International (BWI) will present, **“Boating at a Crossroads: How to Live Long and Prosper,”** during its annual General Members meeting beginning at 8:00 a.m. on February 12 during the Miami International Boat Show.

A panel of four of the nation’s top boating journalists with decades of experience reporting on the marine industry will include: Matt Gruhn, editor-in-chief of *Boating Industry* magazine, Marilyn Mower, editor of *Marine Business Journal*, Bill Sisson, editor-in-chief, of *Soundings Trade Only* and Michael Verdon of *International Boat Industry* magazine.

Moderated by BWI board member Michael Sciulla, the panel will discuss strategic changes that the boating industry needs to consider including, making boats more affordable, more fuel efficient and more relevant to a changing consumer demographic.

“Recreational boat sales peaked in 1989 - a generation ago - just as Baby Boomers were hitting their peak earning years and before the advent of the Internet,” said Sciulla. “What worked well for the boating industry then is probably not the best prescription for the future,” he noted.

BWI invites all those who share a concern for the future of the boating industry to attend this forum and participate in the discussion. A question-and-answer session will follow the panel presentation.

No ticket is required for admission. The event is scheduled for the second hour of BWI’s Annual Meeting which runs from 8 to 10 a.m. in the Miami Beach Convention Center, room B121/122.

BWI’s Annual Writing Contest award ceremony will kick off the program during the meeting’s first hour as the winners of its top stories for 2009 will be recognized and \$17,000 in awards presented.

BWI is a non-profit professional organization consisting of writers, broadcasters, editors, photographers, publishers, public relations specialists and others in the communications profession associated with the boating industry. For more information visit www.bwi.org.