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What Have We Done Lately?

The end of the year is sneaking up on me and in many ways all I can think is hallelujah – it’s been a rough year for many and it’s time to bid it adieu. But on second reflection, I realize a lot of good things have come out of 2010 so maybe it’s time to count all the things to be thankful for, especially in BWI.

We’ve taken a multi-pronged approach this year to enhancing our member benefits and getting ready for growth in the years ahead. If you weren’t in Ft. Lauderdale where we discussed some of this year’s changes, here are the highlights.

First, we have launched and tweaked the Web site, BWI.org. If you haven’t been there lately, check it out. You can pay your dues online via PayPal, participate in a webinar, get the latest news, and soon, you’ll be able to update your own info via an interactive member directory.

Second, we’ve added education to our member benefits with our webinar series. (Since the second webinar is coming in early December, we can now call it a series.) The first was by Kim Kavin about how to start your own blog/site. The second will be Diane Byrne sharing tips on how to use social media to drive traffic to your site.



Watch your email for that schedule.

Third, we’re considering offering BWI logo’d apparel. Since many BWI members these days are freelancers, we showed off some BWI-wear in Lauderdale, so independents can be identified as press even if not associated with one magazine. We’ll be doing an online survey to gauge interest so please let us know if this is something you’d like us to offer.

Fourth, we’ve sent information to writers overseas to grow our membership and are looking to partner and share benefits with other writing associations. If you have ideas on expanding our ranks, let me know.

Fifth, put Miami on your calendar since that’s the next time we’ll all be able to meet in one place. Mike Sciulla did an excellent job bringing two speakers to Lauderdale who enlightened us about what

health care reform will mean to the self-employed. Our next speaker series will be in Miami so be sure to join us.

Finally, it’s time for the annual writing contest and I’m happy to report that all 17 categories were funded by our generous sponsors. We’re still searching for the grand prize sponsor like the one we had in West Marine. This year, BWI paid \$2500 out-of-pocket to the overall winner, Liz Walz – see page 4 for more on her winning story.

Remember that the deadline for materials to be delivered to BWI HQ is December 15 and that if you renew with your contest entry, you’ll be paying the old dues rate. Also please remember to volunteer to be a judge for the contest – we need almost 70 judges to read the entries and it’s a great way to learn from good writing.

Let me know what you’d like to see covered in this newsletter or how BWI can better serve and represent you. Contact me at totemgroup@msn.com and let’s be thankful for all we have accomplished lately, because it truly is a lot.

Zuzana Prochazka
BWI President

2010 Writing Contest Under Way

BWI has officially opened its 18th Annual Writing Contest that recognizes excellence in boating, fishing and travel journalism. Again this year 17 categories have been maintained that each will award \$500 for first place, \$300 for second and \$200 for third place winners. The newest category, "Original Online Content," recognizes the best blogs, articles, videos, photos, podcasts, and social media streams.

If you are writing about Megayachts, Electronics, Fishing, Ethics or Gear, these categories have been a little light in submissions recently. Entering in those will, as they say, improve your odds of recognition and cash awards. Entries must be received at BWI headquarters (not post-marked) by December 15, 2010.

BWI members are allowed two submissions to the contest without charge; additional entries are \$25 apiece. Each category will be judged by four BWI members in the first few weeks of the New Year. Cash awards and plaques are presented to the winners at the Miami International Boat Show in February, 2011. A hard copy of the contest brochure and the entry form were mailed. To download it go to www.bwi.org/downloads/BWI2010WritingContest.pdf.

Calling all judges!

With 17 categories in this year's contest, 68 judges will be needed. Each member of BWI's Board of Directors has

volunteered to chair a category, but that means seven more chairs are needed. While last year's judges will be contacted, additional judges will almost certainly be needed, plus a handful of alternates. Judging is a great way to keep up on all the subjects, ideas and great writing that have taken place during the year. Those interested in judging should contact Contest chair Lindsey Johnson at ljohnson@lakelandboating.com or executive director Greg Proteau (info@bwi.org, 847/736-4142) as soon as possible.



Categories & sponsors

Boating Columns – sponsored by KVH Industries, Inc.

Boating Lifestyles – sponsored by Boats.com/Yachtworld.com

Boating Profiles - sponsored by ZF Marine

Boating Travel or Destinations – sponsored by Couplmate Trailer Parts

Boating Adventures – sponsored by Discover Boating

Boat/Engine Care and Maintenance – sponsored by Interlux Yacht Finishes

Electronics – sponsored by Jeppesen Marine

Ethics and Environment – sponsored by Thetford Marine

Fishing – sponsored by Suzuki Motor Corporation

Boating Issues, News and Analysis – sponsored by Mercury Marine

The Business of Boating - sponsored by Home Port Marine Marketing

Seamanship, Rescue & Safety – sponsored by Sea Tow Services International

Technical Writing – sponsored by Dometic Marine

Boat Tests – sponsored by Volvo Penta

Gear, Electronics and Product Tests – sponsored by Xantrex Technology Inc.

Megayachts - sponsored by Awlgrip North America

Original Online Content – sponsored by National Marine Electronics Assn.

Freelance Life: Editors & Contest Prep

By Lisa Knapp

BWI's Annual Writing Contest is the most visible and a premiere benefit for many members. It creates excitement for the writers, editors and others involved to review the past year's work, select their best, copy and package it up, and fire it off to peers to review. Maintaining sponsorship of all 17 categories this year was no simple feat, which suggests the value of the contest to the publishing and boating industries.

Kate Simpson Lardy, *Dockwalk's* editor in chief, and I won first place for 2007 Consumer News with our adventure to Key West to report on the saga of S/Y Legacy and its reclusive millionaire owner. Kate edited several of my stories that won BWI awards in *Dockwalk*. She wasn't with me in the reporting of these stories, but was the editor who believed in and polished what I pitched, envisioned and wrote.

Legacy was picked up and re-edited in several languages in *Dockwalk's* sister titles and I later ran updated versions in *Soundings* and *International Yachtsman*. I continued reporting this tale of vessel removal for months and years. It was a great story and I milked freelance life telling it.

The editors helped extend the story and I recognized and appreciated their interest and guidance. It would be good if BWI had a system to recognize the best editing, but implementing a plan on accurately evaluating how much was due to the writer and how much to the editor is

nearly impossible. For now, our editing colleagues should celebrate the promise they saw in the articles, how they tailored them to their readers and helped some writers become winners under their masthead.

Why should you enter?

In the immortal words of the late Ed McMahon, "If you don't enter, you can't win." Surely there's something you wrote that's worth evaluation by professional marine writers and editors. All entrants are dealing with shorter page counts and less editorial space, so it's still a level playing field. Pick your two best stories and enter them. It's free with your dues and you could win big bucks.

While some editors don't actually write articles, many do author a column or editor's letter, which qualifies in the columns category. Have you ever entered?

It is an honor to win a BWI award. If you're wondering what it takes to win, volunteer to be a judge in a category you don't enter. It's worth your time to educate yourself and see what others are writing and understand the contest process, which is very fair.

How entries are scored

Each of the 17 Writing Contest categories has a unique "scoring sheet" to guide the four judges. The sheets begin with the category definition then ask judges to assign a 1 (low) to 10 (high) rating in 10 reading areas. A

"5" is considered average while a "10" is superior; as such, a score of 90 is strong where 50 would be average. Scores are totaled, the top three gain cash awards and any receiving 95% of the third-place score receive merit awards.

Only one scoring test is purely subjective, asking how well the judge personally liked the entry. The other nine tests focus on basics, such as effective leads, transitions and structure, personality and voice, originality, use of language and imagery, fairness and accuracy, educational or entertainment value. Of course, the entry must fit the category definition and abide by the rules.

Certain categories ask specific questions of judges. Technical Writing asks if the text is comprehensible and how well technical concepts are explained. For Boating Profiles, does the writer provide a sense of really knowing the subject(s)? Are Boat Test or other product reviews objective providing useful detail or simply drawn from a brochure?

At the end of the process most judges find their ratings are on par with colleagues and they often choose the same top selections. In that regard, the goal of the contest to recognize the best boating writing is consistently achieved.

Let's cheer for all the winners (and their silent editors) and the contest that provides so much recognition for all involved.

**Deadline for receipt
of materials at BWI
HQ is December 15**

Lisa Hoogerwerf Knapp is 1st vice president of BWI. She chairs BWI's fundraising committee, serves on the writing contest committee and volunteers as a contest judge/chaire. Her byline appears in various megayacht publications and she is currently immersed in the Gulf Oil Spill Crisis in Mississippi.

Walz Receives Grand Prize Award

Liz Walz, editor-in-chief of *Boating Industry* magazine, is the recipient of the BWI Grand Prize Writer's Award this year which included a \$2,500 cash prize and crystal trophy. The announcement was made during the BWI membership meeting during the Ft. Lauderdale Boat Show. Walz works from her home in Manlius, NY and has served as an editor of the magazine for 10 years.



Liz Walz

Independent judges from Northwestern University's Journalism school picked Walz's article, "The New Word-of-Mouth," for the honor. It is a persuasive treatise on why businesses need social networking strategies and how to implement them. Published in the June, 2009 issue of the magazine, it goes deep in research, reporting how experts leverage social media then ties compelling industry-specific examples to prove the promises. Illustrating each of the social sites, she removed the mystery of participation, explained how to "listen" and "respond," then ardently suggested "clicking in."

Judges described Walz's entry as being, "Soooo on target. The right stuff at the right time. The writing is crisp. Organization is about perfect. You can not read this without learning something – painlessly even in these painful economic straits. This makes for a most significant story." To access the story, click on www.bwi.org/downloads/p22x30_BI09JUN_Social%20Networking2.pdf.

Walz explains the way she approached the assignment: "When I was tasked with exploring social networking, I was truly starting from scratch. I started a Facebook page, a LinkedIn profile and a Twitter account for the first time. But I knew I needed to learn more about social networking to evaluate its potential for our magazine and for our readers' businesses.

Social Network Education

"That's when I picked up '33 Million People in the Room' by Juliette Powell and 'groundswell' by Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff. Not only did I get a great education, but I started to get excited about what our magazine and the industry could accomplish by using social networking tools."

She goes on to say ... "The marine industry might not be leading the way with online technologies, but its companies are increasingly finding them to be useful tools. That was the most fulfilling part of researching this article: interviewing marine business professionals who were finding success and sharing their stories. There's nothing more powerful, more likely to get a reader up from their chair



THE NEW
word
-of-
mouth

Why your marine business needs to develop a social networking strategy today, and what it should consider.

Facebook
Twitter
LinkedIn

to take action, than learning that their peer, their competitor or their business partner is finding success with a strategy that they then try."

Of her writing in general, Walz says, "It has been incredible to work as part of a group of people that truly functions as a team, united behind a common vision and dedicated to reaching it together. That vision – the magazine's editorial mission – is to serve as a trusted source of proven solutions that deliver real results for our readers' businesses. With the birth of the Top 100 Dealers Program, I feel our magazine has the ability to make a real difference in the lives of our readers and the industry at large."

Honorable mentions

The judging team identified several additional entries for excellence in writing:

- "It Was A Club of Their Own" by Ann Dermody in *BoatUS Magazine*:
- "Bouncing Along the Bottom" by Michael Verdon in *International Boat Industry*
- "SoundingsOnline.com" by Bill Sisson.

Supporting Member News

BoatUS Helps Find Lowest Price Fuel

A new partnership with MarineFuel.com is helping BoatUS members find fuel at the lowest price. For a discounted annual fee, members can go online to find continually updated prices for marine diesel and marine gasoline at 2,200 fuel docks in the U.S., Bahamas and Caribbean. Advanced searching can help locate ethanol-free fuel, additives, discounts and specific amenities at 8,700 marinas. More information is available at www.MarineFuel.com/BoatUS.

ZF Intros POD Drive for Small Boats

At the Fort Lauderdale Boat Show ZF Marine introduced a single POD propulsion system with joystick control to bring the control technology to small pleasure craft applications. The company demonstrated the new system on a Sea Vee center console sport fishing boat. The package combines the POD drive, thrusters, and joystick control application that will offer joystick control and maneuverability while employing the pleasure craft industry's first single POD driveline. For more

information contact Martin Meissner, martin.meissner@zf.com.

RBFF Inducted to Fresh Water Fish Hall

The Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) was recently inducted into the Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame and honored for its contributions, dedication and service to the sportfishing industry. The Fresh Water Hall is the international headquarters for education, recognition and promotion of fresh water sportfishing. It contains a museum in Hayward, Wis., with fishing world records. Visit www.freshwater-fishing.org/ei-govaward.html.

Grow Boating Gets 2011 Funding

Grow Boating, Inc. announced in mid November that the NMMA Board of Directors approved full restoration of Grow Boating assessments effective January 1, 2011. The decision comes after a task force, comprised of representatives from the Grow Boating Board of Directors, submitted its recommendation to the NMMA Board to reinstate full assessment collection to reignite the

Discover Boating campaign in 2011. The restored assessments are projected to collect \$4.5 million by the end of 2011 to fund the campaign.

"We began to see our efforts paying off

with participation increases in 2006, 2007 and 2008 after a decade-long decline," notes Thom Dammrich, president of Grow Boating, Inc. and NMMA. Contact Kelly Kaylor, kkaylor@nmma.org.

NMEA Honors Husick

The National Marine Electronics Association celebrated the life of Chuck Husick, who died September 13 at the age of 77. Association President, David Hayden, presented NMEA's Lifetime Achievement Award posthumously to Husick's son and grandson at the October NMEA Conference & Expo.

Among Husick's many projects was his commit-



David Hayden (from l.), Husick's son Brad and grandson Graham

ment to enhance safety and boaters' rights. He advocated for the continuation of Loran C in opposition to a decision by the federal government to discontinue it. He was a longtime BWI member and editor of Chapman's Piloting and Seamanship. NMEA's Lifetime Achievement Award honors remarkable persons who have "improved the public good through the field of marine electronics."



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Elections To Be Held In January

Elections for BWI Directors and Officers will be held in January. Two Director seats (that carry three-year terms) come open this year as do all officer positions (President, 1st V.P. and Second V.P. are one-year terms). Active and associate members may run for Directors spots, but only active members may serve as officers. Active and associate members vote in the election.

Members are encouraged to run. Duties include attending two director meetings a year (no expenses paid), usually held in conjunction with a major boating event, participation in as-needed conference calls, and volunteering for such plum assignments as Committee chairperson, Contest chair or officer's spot. For more information, contact Greg

Proteau, at info@bwi.org.

Candidates need to provide a brief summary, by December 15, of their experience, qualifications and ideas to help BWI grow. Summaries are reviewed by the nominating committee which consists of the President, Immediate Past President and Executive Director. They are also provided to the members in advance of the voting.

PayPal Now Set Up for Dues

For members who prefer paying with credit cards or wish to save a stamp, dues payments can now be attended to on line at www.bwi.org by clicking on the "join" tab and scrolling toward the bottom of the page. There, clicking on the "pay now" buttons connects to the PayPal system in the appropriate member category. Major credit cards can be used, or money transferred



from PayPal accounts. A notice of the transaction is sent to BWI HQ and credited to the member's account.

The system is especially helpful for offshore members because it automatically con-

verts other currencies to U.S. dollars, and saves what can be considerable wire transfer charges.

Current dues amounts are built into the payment system. As of January 1, 2011:

- Active dues will increase from \$35 to \$50
- Associate dues from \$40 to \$60
- Supporting dues from \$150 to \$175

Welcome New Members

Membership details, benefits and applications can be found at www.bwi.org under the "Join" tab, or send an email to info@bwi.org.

Supporting Members

- Thetford Marine
Nadine Burns, Marketing Mgr.
Ann Arbor, MI

- Couplemate Trailer Parts, LLC
Laurie Pedrick, North American Sales Manager
Sparks, NV

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Send items to be considered for publication to Greg Proteau, info@bwi.org. All information contained herein is meant for the use of members, is in their best interest, and appears in as true and accurate a form as possible.

Membership in BWI is open to anyone involved in the recreational boating industry. Active members are generally writers, editors, photographers and broadcasters. Associate members are generally P.R. or communications firms. Supporting members are usually manufacturers or ad agencies.

