



# Journal

Founded in 1970

February 2011

## Inside this issue:

Writing Awards	2
NMEA's Master Dealer Program	
Future of Journalism	3
BWI Election Results	4
Gordon Houser, Master Marketer	
Miami Innovations	5
Calendar & Events	6
New Members	

## Readings from Miami Shows

I'm excited (or should I say relieved) to say that last week's Miami International Boat Show continued the trend set by the shows of last Fall. There was a positive energy on the floor and at the docks, and overall attendance was up 14 percent over last year. Attendance at Strictly Sail was down eight percent from 2010 but the buzz was much better than last year when the show was combined with the powerboats at Sea Isle Marina (where attendance was not tracked separately).

Thom Dammrich of the NMMA said at the industry breakfast that the worst seems to be behind us, this based on rising consumer confidence and increased sales of light vehicles and RVs that track closely with boat sales. Let's hope he's right.

We had 110 people attend the BWI breakfast where we distributed the writing contest awards. Bill Sisson and Mark Pillsbury needed suitcases for the plaques they hauled home for their respective writers. Use the link on page 2 to access the full list of winners, merit awards and sponsors.

It was telling to see most of the audience stay after the awards to listen to the panel discussion entitled "The Future of Marine Journalism"

coordinated by Mike Sciulla. Five top editors and publishers shared with us their views on freelance opportunities and the skills we as writers need to develop to succeed. Read more about your future on page 3.

This spurred the discussion at the board meeting that followed. We've identified two more educational webinars that should help our members navigate this ever-changing environment. One will be on "Legal Issues For Freelancers" which will address topics such as contracts, liabilities and the potential to form LLCs or S-Corps. The other will be "Better Writing for the Web" and will focus on writing styles and tips for pieces that are specifically destined for online publication.

For those of you who have attended our last two webinars, we're still working out our technical issues but the content is good so watch

the newsletter for scheduling of the next two.

Finally, regarding BWI logo'd clothing – after our survey, it became clear that there are those who would like to have the merchandise but that BWI can't possibly deliver it in all the various flavors requested without investing in quite a bit of inventory. But, we have paid for the digitization of the logo which we will post on the website so you can have a printer download it and put it on anything you wish. We should have this up in the next few weeks.

Also, the member directory will be finished in its final interactive form by the end of March (testing in mid-March). As our freelancer base grows, many of us have updates to make more frequently than annually, so go online at [bwi.org](http://bwi.org) and update all your information. We'll send out an email when it's ready.

As always, you can send me comments, suggestions, or questions at [totemgroup@msn.com](mailto:totemgroup@msn.com). If either of the webinar topics is your area of expertise, let me know and we'll get you positioned as the guru.

**Zuzana Prochazka  
BWI President**



# Writing Awards A Highlight In Miami

Top marine journalists in the U.S. and beyond were recognized February 18 during BWI's annual meeting held in conjunction with the Miami Boat Show. Presentations in 16 contest categories repre-

senting \$16,000 in awards were made to first (\$500), second (\$300) and third (\$200) place scorers. Cash award recipients also received a recognition plaque noting their "Excellence in creating com-

pelling stories about the boating lifestyle through entertaining, educational and inspiring journalism."

In its 18th year, the BWI contest attracted 146 participants submitting 365 entries. In addition to cash awards, Certificates of Merit awards were also announced and are being delivered to writers of another 53 articles which scored within 95 percent of third-place tallies in each category. All submissions to the contest were published in 2010 and judged by BWI members in the first weeks of 2011.

A crowd of 100-plus were on hand to mark the celebra-



**Dometic's Doug Curtis (from l.) with Zuzana Prochazka and Technical Writing winner Lenny Rudow. Photo by Ron Ballanti.**

tion and a number of contest sponsors made personal presentations. For complete results, go to [www.bwi.org/news/bwi-writing-contest](http://www.bwi.org/news/bwi-writing-contest).



**Jeppesen's Ellison Overhardt (from l.) with Electronics winner Ben Ellison and BWI's Zuzana Prochazka. Photo: Ron Ballanti**

## NMEA's "Master Dealer" Program

National Marine Electronics Association chairman David Gratton took the opportunity to brief all attending the BWI

to report on its unique benefits to the boating public and industry.

The Master Dealer Program will allow boaters to identify marine electronics dealers committed to education, technical proficiency, and customer service consistent with the organization's high standards.

To qualify, dealerships must have at least one Certified Marine Electronics Technician (CMET) on staff and meet requirements for technical education and proper use of specific test equipment. A point system based on technical courses that are completed successfully is used to determine a dealership's eligibility. Focus is on three main areas: technical proficiency, education, and customer service.



**Present for NMEA's intro were Jim Fullilove (from l.) of Marine Electronics Journal, NMEA chair David Gratton, Zuzana Prochazka and NMEA publicist Bruce Cole.**

Miami Annual meeting about the launch of the NMEA Master Dealer Program. BWI members received a flash drive containing specifics of the new effort and the first opportunity

Dealers participating in the program will provide customers with a Consumer Bill of Rights. The document outlines customer expectations, how to file a complaint, and how complaints will be reviewed and resolved.

"The Master Dealer Program is a key component in our pledge to the boating public that NMEA dealers have the knowledge and expertise to deliver superior customer service," said David Hayden, president of NMEA. "We want boaters to know that when they see the Master Dealer logo, they're getting the best service, equipment, and advice."

For information on the new program or CMET classification, visit [www.NMEA.org](http://www.NMEA.org) or call 410/975-9425.

# Writing Future: Efficiency & Videos

BWI's Miami Newsmaker panelists discussing the "Future of Marine Journalism" offered a frank assessment of continuing challenges for writers and what publications and websites will be seeking in the near future. Common themes are that all in media are having to produce more with less, expect flawless stories and images, view deadlines as ever more important, and that video is becoming the new "sidebar" to articles. Advice to writers: be useful, agreeable and indispensable, find ways to add value, increase delivery speed, and keep up with the technology.

Panelists included John Burnham, Editorial Director at YachtWorld.com/boats.com, Tim Cole, Executive V.P. at Belvoir Media Group, Duncan McIntosh, Group Publisher of *Editor and Publisher* as well as a number of boating titles, David Ritchie, Editorial Director at Bonnier Marine Group and Bill Sisson, Editor-in-Chief, Soundings Publications. BWI Director Michael Sciulla, chairman of the committee producing the forum, served as moderator.

## Effects of Recession

Real opportunity exists for freelancer growth. Full-time staff has been transitioned off many mastheads in response to demands of the Great Recession, while those remaining are expanding roles from pure print to adding web-based mix, managing more outside contributors, getting involved in design or handling administrative duties. Titles and sites that have

survived are picking up market share and there is optimism that the corner has turned to real growth.

The recession put the squeeze on publications beyond the severe drop in revenue for ad pages and views. Writers

know the page counts are down, but those relying on subscriptions are working harder to find new prospects as they look for ways to insulate renewals. Sometimes content shifts were needed, as boat builder ads gave way to water toys in one example. As print receded, online visits often mushroomed, but the puzzle is how to monetize eyeballs that previously paid to hold a page.

Print products are not doomed, panelists said, but their format and delivery will change. *Soundings*, with its trademark tabloid presentation, is moving to a standard magazine size to cut production costs and better compete on newsstands. Mailing costs will continue to eat away at profits and force some titles from paper. Bonnier is looking for ways to add events for another way to engage readers and viewers in person. The editors urged writers to bring ideas to them to help the products become more needed or relevant.

## Where Media Is Headed

Everyone is focused on mobile delivery of their work and learning how to leverage



the ungainly social media to attract attention. This is difficult – and potentially costly – for many reasons, beginning with the reformatting of websites to translate to "pads" or smartphones and requirements to deliver appropriate, and often disparate, messages to Facebook or Twitter, visuals to YouTube or others yet unknown.

Mobile media will demand a different skill set to write and package content for it. Agreed is that writing for print simply does not work on the web and providers need to learn what works for each. The other urgent and largely unmet need is packaging longer works into two- to three-minute videos to tell the compressed story or drive readers to a longer format. If journalists aren't carrying a small video camera, they need to get one and use it now.

The Newsmaker event had an aura of an "unknown world," where definite answers are few, directions are murky, and demands are in constant flux. For listeners there and writers in general, perhaps the best advice was to "try everything."

**Futuristic panelists in Miami:** Tim Cole (fr. l.), John Burnham, Duncan McIntosh, Michael Sciulla, Dave Ritchie and Bill Sisson.

## Election Maintains Previous Board

The BWI annual election for Directors and Officers had 82 Active/Associates voting out of 245 eligible (in good standing members, those who have paid their 2011 dues) resulting in a response rate of 33%, more than the 25% needed for a quorum validation. Voting took place through January 31. Thank you to those who cast ballots.

The Officer slate was re-elected, consisting of Zuzana Prochazka as President, Lisa Knapp as First Vice President, and Glen Justice as Second Vice President. Two Director seats were filled with three-year terms that expire at the end of 2013: Alan Wendt and Alan Jones will serve in these spots. Continuing as Directors are

Lindsey Johnson, Marilyn Mower, Michael Sciulla and immediate past President Kim Kavin. Executive Director Greg Proteau serves as Secretary and Treasurer.

Additional information about the Board members is posted at [www.bwi.org/about](http://www.bwi.org/about). Contact information for all Directors is on the last page of this newsletter.

## Houser Feted for Marketing Prowess



**NMMA's Ben Wold (from l.) with Gordon Houser and BWI Lifetime member Bob Black in Miami.**

Long-time BWI Associate Member C. Gordon Houser, a marine marketing veteran who helped transform yachting into recreational boating by making the sport more appealing to millions of middle-class Americans, was honored in Miami by Marine Marketers of America (MMA) with its first Neptune Award for Lifetime Achievement. Making the presentation was former BWI Executive Director Bob Black who can also claim a history of boating promotion feats.

Houser launched his career in boating in 1954 with the Thompson Boat Company and

through mergers, job jumps and transfers, was affiliated over the years with Chris-Craft, Donzi Marine, Wellcraft, and finally headed marketing for Genmar's group of companies in Sarasota.

He was one of the first to recognize that non-endemic publications such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The New Yorker* and *Cigar Afficianado* were especially productive as advertising outlets for selling boats. He also pioneered the use of schools as a way of marketing boats, inventing the Wellcraft Offshore Boot Camp for Scarab owners, the Wellcraft Offshore Fishing School and the Genmar Backwater Fishing School.

Describing it as a passion, Houser says, "Marketing is a multi-disciplined occupation. In boating, you need to be part of the sales department to know what's moving and what isn't, part of the engineering department to understand what's special and how it works, part of new products planning, part public relations and a big part of advertising. I was never bored. Never ever," he said. Houser served on a number of NMMA committees, noting his greatest satisfaction came from years on the Shows Committee, where he served twice, once as chairman. He retired from boat building in 2004, recently celebrated his 80th birthday, and lives in Sarasota, with his wife, Vida.

MMA president Wanda Kenton Smith said, "Gordon Houser is an industry trailblazer who helped to transform recreational boating into a multi-billion dollar industry that serves more than 10 million boat owners. MMA is very proud to present this distinguished award to one of our industry's marketing and promotional giants who has been an inspiration to many of us."

# Innovations Abound at Miami Shows

Twelve marine products were recognized in Miami for innovative achievement by the NMMA and BWI. "We had an outstanding group of entries this year and saw innovations that are sure to pave the way for boating industry advancement," noted Zuzana Prochazka, overall Innovation Awards' chair, and president of BWI's Board of Directors. "The judges were impressed with the depth of products entered this year."

Additional BWI members serving as judges were Miami judging chair Alan Wendt, Diane Byrne, Roger McAfee, Robert Buller, Lenny Rudow, and Jack Horner. Judges' writing credits can be seen through the link at the end of this article.

Eleven Innovation Awards and one Honorable Mention were made in the following nine categories:

## Cruisers (25' to 60')

**Chaparral 327 SSX Bow Rider.** Wendt commented, "It shakes up the bow rider category by providing a truly livable space below. How many Innovation Award judges can fit into the 327 cabin? It turns out, all of them."

## PWCs, Pontoons

**BRP's Sea-Doo GTI SE 130 Watercraft.** Buller noted, "With its new ergonomically designed deck, fuel efficient ECO mode, Intelligent Throttle Control and Breaking System, this is a smart package with a price point under \$9,000."

## Sailboats

**Beneteau Sense Series.** "With

two models in its line, the Sense Series opens the doors to sailing for those who might otherwise be nervous by close-quarters maneuvering with its Dock and Go System," said Byrne.



so easy, even a power boater could do it."

## Water Sports

**Mastercraft Zero Flex Tower 5P.** Horner said, "This is a smartly designed, well built, tower of power that looks like mechanical muscle."

## Outboard Engines

**Suzuki DF 40A/50A.** Judges pointed out the 3-cylinder outboards provide 15 percent more displacement and are 5 percent lighter than their 40 and 50 HP predecessors.

## Safety Equipment

Dual winners with different approaches ...

### **Navionics Mobile iPhone**

**Marine & Lakes Mobile App** with user overlay. Byrne commented, "This is a great combination of current local knowledge and the power of social media to create a greater good."

### **Lake Lite Solar Powered Illuminating Buoys.**

These allow boaters to see a buoy at night, and read it. Rudow adds, "Hey, I'd hit that less."

**BWI's judging team in Miami (from left): Alan Wendt, Roger McAfee, Lenny Rudow, Diane Byrne, Jack Horner, Zuzana Prochazka, and Robert Buller.**

## Consumer Electronics

Dual winners and Honorable Mention ...

**Simrad BSM-2 Broadband Sounder.** Rudow described this sounder as the only recreational sonar to incorporate commercial-grade frequency sweeping pulse compression (CHIRP) technology with up to five times greater target resolution.

**B&G Zeus Sailing Navigation System.** Horner said, "This navigation system will help cruisers and racers make much better routing decisions."

**Honorable Mention:** Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation "Take Me Fishing" Boat Ramp Mobile App.

## Non-Electric Hardware

### **Seldén Reversible Winch.**

Noting the product allows sheeting in or out precisely as needed and with only one hand, McAfee added, "It was

For more information on the Innovation Awards, visit

[www.nmma.org/news.aspx?id=17954](http://www.nmma.org/news.aspx?id=17954).

**BWI OFFICERS****President****Zuzana Prochazka ('11)**[totemgroup@msn.com](mailto:totemgroup@msn.com)**1st Vice President****Lisa Hoogerwerf Knapp ('11)**[lisaknappwrites@aol.com](mailto:lisaknappwrites@aol.com)**2nd Vice President****Glen Justice ('11)**[glenjustice@madmariner.com](mailto:glenjustice@madmariner.com)**BWI DIRECTORS****Michael Sciulla ('12)**[msciulla@gmail.com](mailto:msciulla@gmail.com)**Alan Wendt ('13)**[awendt@wendtproductions.com](mailto:awendt@wendtproductions.com)**Alan Jones ('13)**[boatscribe@comcast.net](mailto:boatscribe@comcast.net)**Lindsey Johnson ('11)**[me@iamlindseyjohnson.com](mailto:me@iamlindseyjohnson.com)**Marilyn Mower ('11)**[southernocean1@mac.com](mailto:southernocean1@mac.com)**Kim Kavin****BWI Past President**[kim@kimkavin.com](mailto:kim@kimkavin.com)**Greg Proteau****Executive Director**[info@bwi.org](mailto:info@bwi.org)

# Calendar & Events

## Safety & "Green" Grants Program

The BoatU.S. Foundation's Grassroots Grants Program provides funding for local projects that educate boaters on boating safety and clean boating topics. Application deadline is April 1. Traditional boating organizations as well as local groups, clubs, school and college nonprofit organizations are eligible for grants for up to \$4,000. Apply at [BoatUS.com/Foundation/Grants](http://BoatUS.com/Foundation/Grants).



accessories. It's managed and produced by Show Management and sponsored in part by Yachts Magazine. For information, call 954/764-7642 or visit [ShowManagement.com](http://ShowManagement.com).

## St. Patrick's Day Fishing Tourney

Harbour Towne's annual tournament in Dania Beach, FL to benefit a child suffering with a chronic medical condition begins March 16 with a Captain's Party; the one-day fishing tournament out of Port Everglades is March 19. Limited to boats 37' in length

and under. Contact: Michelle Van Lenten, [we-strecsrmtv@prodigy.net](mailto:we-strecsrmtv@prodigy.net), 954/926-0300 ext 0.

## Yacht Report's Superyacht Forum

Hosted by The Yacht Report Group, and organized by Superyacht Events, the American Superyacht Forum is described as the largest conference in the world focused solely on the American Superyacht Industry. The event, scheduled for May 16 to 18 in Ft. Lauderdale, expects to bring together 300 industry decision makers and influencers to strategize the ways in which the American industry is going to reverse the economic decline and gear towards a stable future. Contact Georgina Lucey, [georgina@superyachtevents.com](mailto:georgina@superyachtevents.com).

# Welcome New Members

Membership details, benefits and applications can be found at [www.bwi.org](http://www.bwi.org) under the "Join" tab, or send an email to [info@bwi.org](mailto:info@bwi.org).

**Active Members**

- Paula Yantorno, Freelance Writer, Westminster, CO
- Stefan Gerhard, Editor-in-Chief, Berlin, Germany

**Associate Member**

- Suzanne Hawley, Writer/ Public Relations Counselor, New Boston, NH

**The BWI Journal** is produced by and for members of Boating Writers International, 108 Ninth Street, Wilmette, IL 60091. (847) 736-4142. [www.bwi.org](http://www.bwi.org).

Send items to be considered for publication to Greg Proteau, [info@bwi.org](mailto: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.