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Ranger Tug Rendezvous in Bremerton, WA

Signs of Industry Recovery

Did you feel it? The groundswell, I mean? Maybe I'm feeling overly optimistic, but the signs are there, I swear.

This month, I attended the Ranger Tugs Fall 2012 Owners Rendezvous in Bremerton, WA, and that's when it hit home with me. About 60 Ranger Tugs, and a couple of Cutwater Boats from the same builder, Fluid Motion, had taken over the municipal marina for two days of shared meals, manufacturer seminars, and explorations of the town. I delivered the Ranger Tugs 31, a new model this year, from the factory in Anacortes, WA and, as I pulled into the marina, was greeted by the sight of a long breakwater dock lined with the company's signature 25-footers.

Trailerable and affordable, the entire line of Ranger Tugs, from 21 to 31 feet, are designed to appeal to a segment of the boating public that find their time afloat as important

as their time ashore. These boats, complete with bow and stern thrusters, efficient single diesels, and comfortable living and sleeping accommodations for couples or small families, depending on size, are priced from just below \$100,000 to the mid-to-upper \$300,000 range. They are affordable for first-time cruising owners as well as those with larger boats looking to downsize.

And they are in high demand. The company says building slots for new boats are already committed well into next summer. These numbers reinforce the idea in my mind that, even as the baby boomers continue to retire in record numbers and as the economy improves, affordable boats of all kinds will help rebuild our sport.

But I felt the groundswell even before this rendezvous.

First, the NMMA Annual Statistical Report published in May highlighted aluminum fishing and pontoon boat sales leading with gains of four percent over 2011. The overall recovery was 6 percent, or \$32.3 billion, the first increase in retail sales of boats, accessories, and marine services since 2006.

Next, housing numbers have moved steadily upward since the beginning of the year, with new starts up

about 25 percent and sales of existing homes up about 9.3 percent in August. More importantly, a rise in the median price of existing homes, up 9.5 percent, further indicates that value that disappeared when the infamous bubble burst is now building back. I'm a firm believer that those with the ability to borrow against their equity may still lead the recreational marine market out of slow-growth doldrums.

Then Ben Bernanke and the Federal Reserve stepped up and committed to further, indefinite, quantitative easing. The stock market responded in kind with positive gains, although these may be peaking.

I've recently spoken to a number of builders with a reputation for quality in the cruising-under-power niche and all have good reports about the fall boat show season and the quality of folks they've seen. Some are already seeing orders to carry them through this winter. Call me overly optimistic if you will. But those of us who are still writing about this business have been riding the groundswell for all it is worth.

Steady as she goes, friends.

You can reach me at jwooldridge@aimmedia.com.

John Wooldridge
BWI President



Walker Succumbs to Medical Battle

BWI Member and former Director Mike Walker died August 16 after a battle with non-alcoholic cirrhosis of the liver. He will be remembered by many in the communications arena as a friend, helpful colleague, constant idea-man and general all-around good guy. He was very active in OWAA, and brought a number of the "hook and bullet" gang into BWI. BWI member and former executive director Bob Black commented, "Mike was a friend, a colleague, a competitor and a gentleman. And he was good, very good indeed at all of the above. It was too soon." He was 64.

The Walker Agency, which he formed in 1982, specialized in representing outdoor recreation clients including Toyota Motor Sales, Yamaha Motor Corp., BoatU.S. and others. He and Pete Johnson worked together for a period after they left Outboard Marine Corp. before heading separate ways. Walker pro-



Mike Walker

duced and wrote for two nationally syndicated radio programs, "The World of Ducks Unlimited," and "Toyota Outdoors." He also wrote a monthly marketing column for *Soundings Trade Only* and appeared in *Boating World* magazine.

Walker was elected OWAA president in 2011 after serving on the executive commit-

tee since 2008. He received numerous OWAA Excellence in Craft contest awards.

Walker was involved in communications his entire life. In high school, he hosted a weekly radio report and wrote for the student newspaper. He then became sports editor for the Kansas University Daily Kansan and a stringer for the Topeka Capital-Journal and Kansas City Star. After graduating from The University of Kansas's journalism school in 1969, he did two overseas tours as a Naval officer before earning a master's degree and teaching journalism at Fort Hays State University in Kansas. He moved on as editorial services manager for Johnson Outboards and public relations manager for Armour-Dial before launching his own firm.

Surviving are Walker's wife Mary, a son and daughter, grandchildren and other relatives.

Lauderdale Show 3 Weeks Away

The 53rd Annual Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show takes place from October 25 to 29 at six locations: the Bahia Mar Yachting Center, the Hall of Fame Marina, the Las Olas Municipal Marina, the Hilton Fort Lauderdale Marina, the Broward County Convention Center and the Sails Marina. FLIBS is owned and spon-



sored by the Marine Industries Association of South Florida, and managed and produced by Show Management.

Deadline to preregister for media credentials is October 4. To do so, go to the web address above and click on the [media credentials](#) tab. Credentials will be available in the press room beginning October 24. The press room is located in the Mariner

Room on the third floor of the Bahia Mar Beach Hotel on Seabreeze Boulevard.

Media questions can be directed to Danny Grant, 954/776-1999 ext. 235, dgrant@piersongrant.com, or Marielle Sologuren, 954/776-1999 ext. 226, mso-loguren@piersongrant.com.

For more information on FLIBS, visit the online press room at <http://pressroom.showmanagement.com>.

IBEX Set for Early October Run

The 22nd annual International BoatBuilders' Exhibition and Conference (IBEX) takes place October 2 to 4 – two weeks earlier than 2011 – at the Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville. The trade show and industry gathering is owned and co-produced by NMMA and *Professional BoatBuilder* magazine.

Co-director Carl Cramer says, "The boating business is finally starting to turn the corner, and at IBEX you can get a jump-start on the business upsurge by seeing what's on the horizon in new products for the coming year, learning about new technologies and techniques ... and networking with your peers." Show management anticipates an increase in attendance, reports more than 100,000 sq. ft. of exhibit space will accommodate 500+ exhibitors, and planned are 90 technical/business seminars, 12 free exhibitor workshops and three full days of meetings. Featured will be an outdoor demo area, Connect Fest, sponsored by the National Marine Electronics Association (NMEA), and the dedicated Aftermarket Pavilion sponsored by *Soundings Trade Only*.

IBEX's annual Innovation Awards will recognize products in a dozen categories entered by show exhibitors and highlight the new and useful developments in the boating world. The judging panel will again be experienced technical writers and



editors from BWI. The judges for 2012 are:

- Alan Wendt (Chair) – First vice president of BWI – freelance writer, publisher and producer of boating rendezvous events.
- Zuzana Prochazka – Former president of BWI – freelance writer and photographer for several publications and websites.
- Alan Jones – Executive editor of *Boating World* magazine – author of hundreds of articles including gear reviews and boat tests.
- Captain Fred Davis – Freelance writer whose bylines appear in several magazines, newspaper columnist, and marine consultant and arbitrator.
- Captain Lou Gainor – Award-winning host of Nautical Talk Radio, heard in New England states and Flotilla Staff Officer of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.
- Milt Rosko – Award-winning boating and fishing writer with nine books to his credit – recipient of Lifetime Achievement Award from the Fisherman's Conservation Association.
- Roger McAfee – author of *The Warm Dry Boat*, guest lecturer, contributor to several publications, former lawyer and past president of the

Metal Boat Society.

BWI members planning to attend IBEX can register at www.ibexshow.com under the "Press" tab. Pick up press credentials in the press room - B106 - where there will be free wi-fi for media, plus stacks of press kits from exhibitors. Mem-



bers interested in attending seminars or special sessions should contact Jim Rhodes who is handling media relations for the event. Contact him at 757/451-0602, Mobile 757/753-1238, jrhodes@rhodescomm.com.

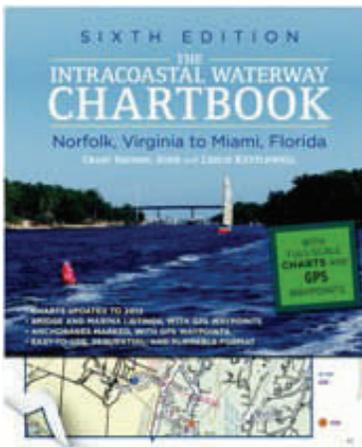
Active/Associate Member News

Kavin & Book Appear On CNN, YouTube

BWI past president Kim Kavin appeared on CNN in early September talking about her book, "Little Boy Blue: A Puppy's Rescue from Death Row and His Owner's Journey for Truth" (Barron's, August 2012). For those familiar with the "pet rescue" subject, Kavin is spreading a valuable message and encouragement to writers contemplating books. The first two chapters can be read for free along with more information at www.little-boy-blue.info. To view the recent YouTube video on the book, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8fD9YsOg98.

Kettlewells Issue Sixth Intracoastal Chartbook

The new sixth edition of *The Intracoastal Waterway Chartbook*, published by International Marine/McGraw-Hill, is now available at major book and marine stores. It was created by chart editors John and Leslie Kettlewell, who have been doing the "Ditch" for more than 25 years. The new edition includes the latest NOAA charts, at full scale and in color, in the "flip-chart" format that has made the book popular. Those using an electronic chart plotter are said to find the book a useful companion. Kettlewell is a long-standing



member of BWI, a member of the Taunton and Cuttyhunk Yacht Clubs, and keeps a motorsailer in New England. Contact him at jjkettlewell@gmail.com.

Clayton Promoting Viral Paddleyway Video

Betsy Clayton reports grant funding has enabled her to produce a video for Lee County Parks & Recreation promoting the 2012 Calusa Blueway Paddling Festival. She's asking colleagues to

Calusa Blueway



Paddling Festival

watch, enjoy and share "The Kayaking Kitty Sanibel Style" video in hopes that it will go viral. The link, www.youtube.com/watch?v=05nNR80NJI0, offers adventures of the feline enjoying the paddleyway. The festival runs November 1 to 4 in Fort Myers-Sanibel, FL and features demos, speakers, instruction, a film festival & photo contest, live music, fishing tournament, races, group tours, club paddles and more. Visit www.CalusaBluewayPaddlingFestival.com.

Members Team Up For Service Textbook

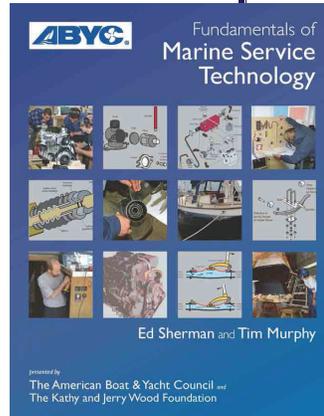
Author Ed Sherman, Director of Educational Programming for ABYC, and Tim Murphy, Editor at Large for *Cruising World* magazine, have teamed up to write *Funda-*

amentals of Marine Service Technology. It will be used by marine trades programs around the country.

The publisher suggests anyone interested in what goes on under the hood will find something of value in the textbook. It has 318 pages, 14 chapters, and hundreds of photos and illustrations. A digital version is also available. Contact ABYC at www.abycinc.org, 410-990-4460 x100.

Bauman's New Site Promotes Saving Fish

Emphasizing fish conservation, MetroMedia Marketing, Inc., the parent company of "Ladies, Let's Go Fishing!" University Series for Women, has launched a website on fish release. Created on behalf of the Switzerland-based Save Our Seas Foundation, www.Save-Fish.com details why and how to release fish. CEO of MetroMedia, Betty Bauman, commented, "This is a one-stop shop for information on why and how to release fish, focusing on sharks and rays, fish most susceptible to improper release yet important to the ocean's ecology." Save Our Seas is focused on the need to protect the world's oceans.



Presented by
The American Boat & Yacht Council
The Kathy and Jerry Wood Foundation

Supporting Member News

Members Recognized With CSI Awards

NMMA has named recipients of the 2012 Marine Industry Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) Awards including several BWI Supporting members. The CSI program honors manufacturers that measure customer satisfaction and pursue continuous improvement. Award recipients achieved

and maintained a standard of excellence of 90 percent or higher in customer satisfac-



tion over the past year. Supporting members included:

- Formula Boats, for Stern-drive Bowrider, Cuddy and Express Boats
- Indmar Products, for Inboard Engines
- Mercury Marine, for Outboard, Inboard and Stern-drive Engines
- Suzuki Motor Corp., for Outboard Engines
- Volvo Penta, for Sterndrive Engines
- Yamaha Outboards, for Outboard Engines

Boat Ed Awards Florida State Initiative

Boat Ed - Kalkomey Enterprises and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators presented their Innovations Award to the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission

during the NASBLA conference earlier in September. FWC developed a statewide At-Risk Vessel application to deal with abandoned and derelict boats. This cost- and time-saving initiative aims to identify what could be future problem boats, and provides a process to deal with them before they become a major issue. To see the initiative visit <http://myfwc.com/boating/waterway/derelict-vessels/> or for information contact Tammy Sapp, tsapp@kalkomey.com.

State of Industries Shown in Video

The Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) attended the International Convention of Allied Sport-fishing Trades (ICAST) show, held during the summer, and showcased its digital assets. RBFF shared video reporting the state of both boating and fishing industries and highlighting efforts to engage consumers via digital media and other resources, many of which are available to media and communicators. To view the video, [click here](#).

Merc Diesels Set Bermuda Race Record

Twin Mercury Diesel TDI engines helped Chris Fertig capture the Bermuda Challenge powerboat endurance world record in early August. Fertig completed the approximate 760-mile run from New York to Bermuda in 21 hours and 39 minutes, beating a decade-old record by 44 minutes in a 37-foot

Statement Marine boat powered by twin 4.2L 350hp turbocharged Mercury Diesel TDI engines. The "Challenge," established in 1996 by *Boating* magazine, was established to promote newer technology and the advances boat and engine companies have made to make long-distance runs in smaller boats possible. Contact Lucas Lauderback, lucas.lauderback@mercmarine.com.

Sea Tow App Sees Heavy Downloads

Sea Tow Services International reports its mobile application for iPhone and Android smartphones is being used widely by boaters as a convenient, multi-function navigation and boating safety tool. The Sea Tow App, which is a free download at www.seatow.com/app, has won a Mobile of the Day (MOTD) Award from Favorite Website Awards (FWA), and is 5-star rated by Apple iTunes. Since its introduction three months ago, the Sea Tow App has been downloaded by smartphone users 63,000+ times.

In a separate announcement, San Simeon By The Sound Center for Nursing, Rehabilitation and Adult Day Health Care in Greenport, N.Y., honored Captain Joe and Georgia Frohnhoefer of Sea Tow as pillars of the community with an unwavering interest in serving the public. Contact Cindy McCaffery, cindymccaffery@sea-tow.com.



Calendar & Events

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Martin Flory Hosts IBEX Hospitality

The Martin Flory Group Client Cooperative Press Suite will be in the Ambassador Room of the Maker's Mark Bourbon House & Lounge, 446 S. Fourth St., on Wednesday, October 3 starting at 6 p.m. Join them for refreshments, to catch up with industry friends, and arrange interviews with their clients at any upcoming shows. Contact info@martinflory.com, 847/662-9070.

SNAME Meet Offers Media Invitation

The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers (SNAME) Annual Meeting and Expo will be staged in Providence, RI, October 24 to 26. Expo is representative of the Society, including all aspects of design, production, maintenance, and operation of ships, submersibles, small craft and

offshore and ocean bottom structures. To view the SNAME 2012 schedule, visit www.sname.org/2012AnnualMeeting. BWI members are being extended a complimentary registration by contacting Alana Anderson, alana@sname.org, 201/499-5066.

Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway Conference

The Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway Association, an alliance of recreational boating and commercial maritime interests, will convene its 13th annual meeting November 13 – 14 at Charleston's (SC) Francis Marion Hotel with this year's theme, "Keep America's Promise: Restore the

Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway." Sessions will address engaging government entities, the current situation for navigation along the 1,100-mile route, updates on problem shoaling areas and long-term solutions to chronic federal funding shortages. See details at www.atlanticintracoastal.org/2012-annual-conference. Contact: Scott Croft, 703/461-2864, SCroft@BoatUS.com.



Welcome New Members

Actives/Associate

Louise Bennett, Public Relations Counselor, Dorset, England

Neil Rabinowitz, Writer/Photographer, Bainbridge Island, WA

Scott Rimmer, Freelance Writer, Sarasota, FL

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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.

