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Late Winter Postpones “Thaw”

I just returned from a whirlwind tour of two early spring shows, the Palm Beach International Boat Show in Florida and the South West International Boat Show in Houston, Texas, and came away positively buoyed by the responses I heard from boat brokers. Frankly, it caught me by surprise.

Only several weeks ago, *Soundings Trade Only* reported a 14 percent drop in February year over year brokerage sales in the U.S., citing 1,679 boats traded in 2013 compared to 1,942 boats in 2012. If you thought that this might have had an effect on the number of boats displayed at the spring shows, like me, you were caught off guard when the number of boats on display at the PBIBS grew by 25 percent this year.

Combined with the news that some well-known brokerage firms like Curtis Stokes and Associates, and DeMillo's Yachts Sales are adding new offices in ports like Annapolis, MD and Belfast, ME respectively, the overall health of the brokerage industry seems to me to be improving despite the numbers. In fact, the half-dozen or so brokers I talked



No thaw needed in Palm Beach.

with on the docks at both shows left me with the firm impression that, while business is not booming, there are more sales being done that the stats might show.

Before I sat down to write this letter, I looked back in *Trade Only Today* and found that year over year brokerage sales for January were well above the five-year average for that month, according to YachtWorld's www.soldboats.com database.

I looked at today's story headlined, "Boat sales suffer setback in February," then looked back to find "Boat sales display renewed power in July," "Boat sales keep steady pace in August," "Boat sales regain strength in October," "Boat sales get a bounce in November," and "December sales solidify industry's 2012 gains."

No doubt about it, the continuing winter weather of

2013 has caused a setback clearly supported by the Statistical Survey numbers. Just don't make the mistake I did, and forget all the good news that got us here over the last 12 months.

Ask a broker and he'll tell you that the thaw is just beginning.

Continue the “Thaw”

You can help transform the thaw into interest in getting people on water through the spring and summer by spreading the word in writing to loyal readers and prospects. On page three, Alan Wendt points out that the industry continues raising the visibility of the boating lifestyle through wide-spread marketing campaigns. Perhaps there's a tie-in to a story you're developing or a newfound pitch idea. A boat-load of information and materials will be reviewed in the April 3 Welcome to the Water webinar; a click-through to signing up is there. Join me in participating next week.

You can reach me at jwooldridge@aimmedia.com.

John Wooldridge
BWI President

Support WTW's National Marina Day

By Alan Wendt
BWI First Vice President

Spring and a new boating season officially began on March 20th, although here at the Cleveland airport I'm watching it snow to beat the band. Hopefully in a week or two, the shrink wrap will come off and white fiberglass will replace the confusing white caps that greeted my view of Lake Erie this morning.

In three months the industry we cover will host the first nationwide boating event dedicated to helping industry stakeholders expand their customer base as the industry collaborates to grow



boating through participation.

Welcome to the Water on National Marina Day, is Saturday, June 8, 2013. More than just marinas, retail dealers will be hosting open houses and demo days.

Hands on classes are being encouraged; the Power Squadron

will be offering safety demonstrations and free boat safety checks. It's the first time all facets of the industry have joined together on a single day with a goal of participation at 500 marinas. Here is a link to the full news release and website dedicated to this event: Welcome to the Water on National Marina Day (www.nationalmarinaday.org).

As your BWI representative on the Marine Industries Growth Summit, I hope you'll be able to spread the word. This is one of the positive results that this group of 40 industry leaders is helping to coordinate. As boating journalists, our role is to report, bring newsworthy events to the attention of our respective audiences and for those who serve on the editorial decision side, occasionally prod and poke to bring about positive change.

Perhaps you can canvas local retail dealers in your area to see what specific events they are planning and convince an editor or two to



On-water and family activities are in focus on National Marina Day.

include these activities in calendars and to green light coverage whether it's a new boat test or to chronicle who the new boater looks like. Most of the manufacturers have recently completed extensive post-recession research and their intriguing findings were clearly evident in the new model designs that debuted at the Miami International Boat Show.

An overview of the Discover Boating 2013 marketing plans will be the focus of all-industry webinar April 3. This 45-minute event will provide a look at the integrated marketing mix on tap for the busy boating months ahead – from digital advertising to social media to public relations. Join in to find out how to get involved in the industry-wide movement to welcome more people to the water.

Date: Wednesday, April 3
Time: 2:00 pm EDT
Reserve at: <https://www.igotomeeting.com/register/271354329>.

BWI Dues Reminder

BWI members who are not current with 2013 dues received a recent email on the subject explaining that the day of the paper invoice delivered by snail mail has gone away. Just like the Annual Writing Contest, dues invoices have gone digital and have been sent electronically.

With the new routine, members are asked to check their listing in the Annual Directory (go to www.bwi.org/downloads/BWI-Directory-2012.pdf) and advance updates, if needed, to BWI HQ. Then they may pay dues by check or via PayPal (with any credit card) by scrolling down to the link on the "Join" page at www.bwi.org. Active dues are \$50 per year, Associate dues are \$60, Supporting member dues are \$175.

Dues payment keeps access available to the member LinkedIn networking site, the On-Line Opt-In Member Directory, and newsletter notification system. If you do not find your listing in the online directory, you may not have set it up. Those unsure about their status, who wish to receive another email invoice, or need more "online directory" details can send a request to info@bwi.org.

Annual Writing Award Article Links

An additional benefit of “going digital” in the BWI Annual Writing Contest is that all of the top three honored articles and posts can be reviewed via links on the BWI website on the Contest page. A listing by category, writer and publication/site of dollar-winning entries can be accessed in list form there, <http://bwi.org/bwicontest/2013winners.htm>. A click then downloads the PDFs that were submitted by entrants; as such, the images do not include author or publication identification.

Accompanying text on the Writing Contest page adds in brief comments by judges on the first-place selections and lists all Merit Award recipi-

AWARDS PRESENTED IN 2013				
1. BOATING COLUMNS -- SPONSORED BY KVH INDUSTRIES, INC.				
1st	Cruising World Magazine	2012-00	A Bug's Life, All Systems Go, Sort of... An Onboard Inferno	Wendy Mitman Clarke
2nd	Sailing Magazine	2012-05	On The Wind	Chris Caswell
3rd	Cruising World Magazine	2012-00	Along for the Ride (or Shanghai'd?). Why the Radical Life Change?. The People You Meet	Michael Robertson
2. BOATING LIFESTYLES -- SPONSORED BY DISCOVER BOATING				
1st	Chesapeake Bay Magazine	2012-07	The Magic of Oz	Jane Meneely
2nd	Boating Magazine	2012-07	Multi-Tool	Jeff Hemmel
3rd	Cruising World Magazine	2012-07	To Wanderer III, A Toast	Thies Matzen
3. BOATING PROFILES -- SPONSORED BY ZF MARINE				
1st	Cruising World Magazine	2012-07	Fortitude Vincimus	Herb McCormick
2nd	Cruising World Magazine	2012-02	From Zero to a Hundred	Elaine Lembo
3rd	Soundings	2012-06	Profiles - Johnstone, Potts	Jan Flannery
4. BOATING TRAVEL OR DESTINATIONS -- SPONSORED BY MARTIN FLORY GROUP				
1st	Cruising World Magazine	2012-09	The Descendants	Peter Nichols
2nd	Cruising World Magazine	2012-01	Up Where We Belong	Alvah Simon
3rd	Cruising World Magazine	2012-01	One Waypoint at a Time	Matt Rutherford
5. BOATING ADVENTURES -- SPONSORED BY YAMAHA MARINE GROUP				

ents (those who scored within 95 percent of the third-place awardees). Sponsors are also noted there.

Members have requested access to the winners via the website, but availability was often limited simply because posts were not made by the

publishers. Now the winning selections can be used by colleagues interested in craft improvement or as guides to content submitted for future contest entries. The 2013 Writing Contest will take place, as always, during the last two months of the year.

U.S. Water Trails System Goes Digital



Waterways enthusiasts and others can now experience the new National Water Trails System through an interactive website that connects users to rivers and waterways through stories and tools. U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced the new National Water Trails System in Feb-

ruary 2012, with the objective of creating a national network of exemplary water trails that are cooperatively supported and sustained. Nine National Water Trails have been designated across the United States.

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program and the Denver Service Cen-

ter are continuing work on "Call to Action" item 12, "Follow the Flow," by partnering to develop the new website, which will improve communication with current and potential water trail managers and with recreational trail users.

Water trail managers can apply for designation through an easy online application, and visitors can learn more about designated trails through a photo gallery, dynamic stories, and videos. An interactive map and new search functions make it easy for users to find national water trails throughout the country.

Visit the new site at www.nps.gov/watertrails.

Active & Associate Member News

Forest Johnson Revamps Website

BWI member and photographer Forest Johnson has announced the creation of a new website featuring his work as a location and aerial photographer specializing in the marine industry at www.forest-johnson.com. It's divided into the lines of work he's been involved in since starting the business in 1986, including several image portfolios, lifestyle and fishing photos, scenics, portraits, ads, brochures and more. Johnson's latest venture into HD video, editing, production, and voice-

overs is detailed. Says Johnson, "I have been fortunate to have won many awards, including being named International Photographer of the Year for the Bahama Islands. I

was also named by *Popular Photo* magazine as a true specialist in my field, and I celebrated my 1000th major magazine cover with the February 1998 issue of *Boating* magazine. To date, I have shot more than 1500 covers."

Kovach Joins Waterways Journal

The Waterways Journal, Inc. announced that Brad Kovach has joined its full-time staff as director of Custom Publishing and Online Content. He has been the freelance editor of *HeartLand Boating* since March 2012, a position he will retain, and has also written and ed-



Kovach

ited for a number of consumer publications, including *Boating World*, *Caribbean Travel & Life*, *Show-Boats International*, *Cabin Life*, *Motor Boating* and *Yacht Essentials*. Kovach will also be responsible for publishing *Quimby's Cruising Guide*, an annual guide for recreational boating on the Mississippi River and adding to custom publishing clients.

Changes at BoatUS in Consumer Affairs

After 26 years of advocating for boaters, BoatUS Consumer Affairs Department director Caroline Ajootian has retired. *Seaworthy Magazine* editor Charles Fort takes the helm of the Consumer Protection Bureau, which seeks redress between boaters and suppliers, offers an online database of consumer complaints and online Recall Safety Alert Registry.

Ajootian was a newspaper reporter and photographer before joining BoatUS in 1986 where she penned consumer-driven stories and managed the Salvage Arbitration Program. She notes, "The marine industry has gone a long way towards adopting consumer service trends with

things like comprehensive warranties, improved overall product quality, and ease of repairs."

Fort becomes Consumer Editor of *BoatUS Magazine* and remains associate editor of *Seaworthy*, the damage avoidance publication. He joined the association in 2002, is a member of ABYC, NFPA and SAMS.

82 Women Learn Hands-on Fishing

Eighty-two women from ages 16 to 84 joined together to learn fishing skills at Betty Bauman's "Ladies, Let's Go Fishing!" Ft. Myers/Matlacha University March 9-10. Held in conjunction with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) through the Sport Fish Restoration Program, the mini-university offered education, hands-on fishing activities, habitat conservation, networking and a fishing trip. Classroom presentations included one by BWI member Betsy Clayton on the Great Calusa Blueway. Upcoming LLGF dates include South Florida/April 12-14, Treasure Coast/May 10-12 and Islamorada/Tavernier Nov. 15-17. For details, visit www.ladiesletsgefishing.com.



Forest Johnson is often in the air capturing high action marine images.



Supporting Member News

Whale Acquires Seaward Products

Whale Water Systems has completed an acquisition to take over production, distribution and servicing of

the complete Seaward Products line creating the new brand – Seaward by Whale – for the appliance side to the business. Whale provides fresh water, bilge and gray waste management systems and now adds a range of water heaters, Princess ranges and cooktops, BBQs, electrical panels, tanks and accessories. Whale will continue to run the acquired facility from Whittier, CA while maintaining U.S. headquarters in Manchester VT. Contact Sheila Roberts, sheilar@whalepumps.com.

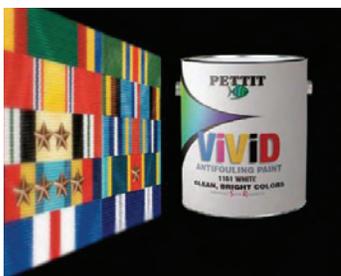
ZF Marine Support On Inland Waterways

ZF Marine has reinforced its commitment to customers in the inland waterway region by announcing a new partnership with Marine Systems Inc. (MSI) which will be responsible for sales and service support. MSI's central location in Paducah, KY puts it in the heart of the Inland Waterways, making it a central support point for commercial craft customers in the region. ZF Marine supplies propulsion system components for motor yachts, defense craft, high-speed ferries, workboats and commercial vessels, in a power range from 10 to 14,000 kW to customers including major shipyards

and engine manufacturers worldwide. Contact Martin Meissner, martin.meissner@zf.com.

Pettit Program To Aid Disabled Vets

Pettit Marine Paint is making a commitment to give back to those who keep the U.S. safe and free through its "Sail for the Troops Program." For



every gallon of Vivid antifouling paint sold between September 1, 2012 and October 31, 2013, Pettit will donate \$1.00 to the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) with a donation goal of \$20,000. DAV is a non-profit organization that helps active military personnel, veterans and their families in filing claims related to disability and pensions, continued education, obtaining health care, and programs for the homeless. Contact: Don Zabransky, 973/776-8255.

Volvo Ocean Race Includes Newport Stop

The 2014-15 Volvo Ocean Race, which will kick off in Alicante, Spain and end in the Swedish city of Gothenburg, will reach North America in Newport, RI in May 2015. "Already, preparations are well underway at Volvo Penta to support the racing teams,"

said Ron Huibers, president of Volvo Penta Region Americas. As exclusive supplier of engines and propulsion systems for the one-design Volvo Ocean 65 sailboats, "We will mobilize all the necessary resources to ensure prompt and professional service for the sailboats at each port of call, through our more than 4,000 dealers in 130 countries." Contact Lindsay Shrewsbury, lindsay.shrewsbury@volvo.com.

Oracle Chase Boats Powered by Yanmar

Yanmar Co., Ltd. has become the Official Technical Partner providing engines and drive systems for Oracle Team USA's two chase boats. The chase boats, each powered by twin Yanmar 8LV-370Z 370 mhp diesel engines and Yanmar ZT370 1.65 drives, are not limited to towing before and after races. With the AC72 racing catamarans set



to reach speeds in excess of 40 knots (74.1 km/h), the chase boats are also responsible for tracking the progress of the race, ready to provide immediate support. Contact marketing@yanmar.com.

Seaward

by **Whale**

Fishing Continues Growth

Reported in "Sportfishing in America: An Economic Force for Conservation," produced by the American Sportfishing Association (ASA), the number of anglers increased 11 percent over the past five years and fishing tackle sales grew more than 16 percent.

According to the new study, America's nearly 60 million anglers are estimated to spend \$46 billion per year on fishing equipment, transportation, lodging and other expenses associated with their sport. With a total annual economic impact of \$115 billion, fishing supports more than 828,000 jobs and generates \$35 billion in wages and \$15 billion in federal and state taxes. Despite the eco-



on fishing gear and motorboat fuel channel more than \$1 billion of anglers' dollars to state fish and wildlife conservation and recreation programs each year.

ASA's analysis is based on data from the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-

Associated Recreation, conducted every five years on behalf of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies by the Census Bureau and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Results were compiled for ASA by Southwick Associates. Contact Donna Leonard, donna@southwickassociates.com.

Boaters and anglers support the nation's conservation efforts through the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund Program. Special taxes

economic difficulties facing the U.S. economy over the past five years, the total amount spent on sportfishing, which encompasses tackle, travel and other equipment, grew five percent.

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Welcome New Members



Active Members

• Estelle Cockcroft,
Writer/Editor/Broad-
caster, Aventura, FL

• Michael O'Reilly,
Writer/Broadcaster,
Thunder Bay, Ontario

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.

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.

