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Survival Stories & Plans

In what we hope will become a series of mini-stories in this newsletter, find the article inside about former BWI President Kim Kavin's changing writing routine over the last decade. In the May issue we carried the transition story that Tom Richardson had from being a full time editor, to starting a blog, launching an e-magazine, then returning to a print platform. In that issue, I also offered background on my journalistic journey.

The point of these reflections is that they offer snapshots of adapting and change by individuals, an overview of how the media and boating world has and continues shifting, and provide encouragement and perhaps an idea or two for others working through transitions, brought about on them or opportunity presented to them.

If you have a story you'd like to share with other members, please consider sending it to us (to Greg Proteau, info@bwi.org). We only need 500-ish words and an image or two. The offer is open to all, including those engaged in communications or marketing work and others producing products or services. If you have a question about suitability, send it to me or Greg.



Part and parcel of changes we are all living through include the evolving issues of taxation, health care coverage, personal and governmental retirement benefits, etc. We've found a firm to provide an overview of these concerns from the freelancer and/or small business perspective to present our next Webinar in August (see details inside). Many members are moving into the pre-retirement zone which financial planners suggest needs attention for long-term success. All members will find the update on "Affordable Health Care," which has become a moving target, useful to assist in planning ahead.

I've often ruminated in these columns to encourage members to stay visible in the marketplace. One tool we offer is serving as a judge for the product and innovation programs run by NMMA and NMEA. We include members who have served in these

positions before, but also look for new ones to keep the process fresh. We have people in place for the September IBEX and NMEA Expo events, but join the list of potential judges if you have the appropriate expertise (look under the "Judging" tab on the website for details).

Final thought on adapting to change: Make sure people can find you. We have three primary platforms for members to maintain or gain visibility. First is the annual directory which provides your basic contact info, writing focus and other details, maintained by us and issued in August or September. There is the online directory accessible by anyone who visits our website and uses a multi-option search function, with info you wish to put there (for access, send a request to info@bwi.org). And, the LinkedIn pages which provide your profile and where you can post and participate in discussions, promotions, etc. (sign up by requesting to join the BWI group).

I hope you are enjoying time out on the water this season.

You can reach me at jwooldridge@aimmedia.com.

John Wooldridge
BWI President

Kavin: 10-Years Survival In Freelance

April 2013 was a big month for me, marking 10 years since I made the leap into full-time freelancing. Back in 2003, I was executive editor at *Yachting* magazine having been there for three years. A few of the best-paid freelance writers, I calculated, were bringing home salaries the same as mine. And they were working from their houses, probably in sweat pants, sending me invoices from Italy and Fiji and Antigua.

It seemed crazy to some people, but I walked away from that secure and stable job to hang out my shingle as a writer. I landed, within the first year, a contributing editor gig with *Power & Motoryacht* magazine, regular freelancing work with titles like *Robb Report* and *Offshore*, and a literary agent who helped me book a deal every year, mostly for travel guides. I worked diligently from home and from yachts all over the globe. The first year freelancing was financially scary, but things soon stabilized with regular clients.

The business started to change in the mid-2000s, when the Internet began to hack away at print media. I launched www.CharterWave.com, a revenue generator and sandbox where I could teach myself everything from content-management systems to search-engine optimization. That site has been online since 2006, updated daily, and it's made



Kim Kavin posing as puppy writer and rescuer, her "other career."

money the entire time. I've had discussions this year about syndicating or selling the site outright. We'll see.

Around 2005, I took on occasional ghostwriting jobs and original content blogs for yachting-company websites. That work, plus remaining editorial and CharterWave, helped when the global economic recession hit with budget cuts at the magazines from 2008 through 2010. Decent book deals became far tougher to get, too.

I felt the same fears as everyone else at that time, but I liked my position as a freelancer. I had enough good contacts and flexibility of skills to stay afloat through the storm, and found myself back on the masthead at *Yachting* as the charter editor, working freelance from home. A few months ago I again became a part-time

editor with *Yachting*, bringing me almost full circle back to where I began this 10-year journey and still working from home. I'm also now helping with Web content, work that didn't exist when I was full-time, but that now is a major part of the job.

The thing that I think it took me the longest to learn about being a successful freelancer is that I can trust in myself to have new ideas. The future always looks fuzzy to freelancers, but I've been able to quell those fears by having regular clients who help me pay the monthly bills, and that financial base gives me the courage to try to make my own bigger ideas a reality. Some may remember BoaterMouth, the website that I launched a few years ago with about a dozen other freelancers. We all made money on that idea (some people made five figures), but ultimately, it didn't stick.

On the other hand, last year I published my first book about my personal passion of rescue dogs, and that's won a few national awards as well as earned me enough to finally install kitchen cabinets that don't fall off when I try to open them. I'm working on the sequel now, and if all goes according to plan, it will be a major portion of my income next year.

I think they call that diversity, being a specialist at luxury yachts and homeless puppies. I call it tapping into a big

continues next page

Next Webinar - Health & Taxes

With the advent of major provisions of the Affordable Care Act taking effect and a U.S. Congress looking ever more earnestly at stemming deficit spending (and raising revenues), individuals and small businesses are looking for guidance to prepare for expected changes and ways to hold on to more of their income. BWI contacted consultants Harry W. Riley, III and David N. Brown who operate an Indianapolis-based financial services firm offering access to insurance and financial planning services and they agreed to lead the next writers' webinar. Riley and Brown currently provide personal and retirement consultation and services for members of The Society of Professional Journalists.

On the health care front, experts suggest it's time to focus on what individuals and employers must know under the new health care rules including coverages, penalties, premiums, etc. The rules are in flux and extremely complicated, but should be anticipated and applied in personal and business finance situations.

Tax issues are no less confusing with the top concerns recently identified as stopping overpayments, identifying and claiming all deductions and credits, avoiding IRS audits, maximizing expenses, leveraging retirement plans, knowing new tax provisions and those that may expire soon.

The webinar will be held August 20 – members will



receive advance notification and how to sign up. As with previous webinars, the session will be recorded and posted on the BWI website for later viewing by those who miss it. This marks the eighth BWI Educational webinar made available through the continued support of Dometic Marine.

Kavin's Move to Freelance *continued*



The lure of travel - and working at home - moved Kavin to freelance a decade ago.

new market, something that every smart freelancer is

always trying to do.

What makes me happiest, though, is knowing that my Old School skills are just as valued today as my New Media abilities. There's a lot of talk out

there about how those of us who grew up in print are dinosaurs. I haven't found that to be true at all.

In fact, I find that my skills

from my print background are what stand out in the field. Whether I'm producing content for books, magazines, or the Web, I find that I am still most respected for my abilities in reporting, writing, and editing. At the end of the day, the best Web content is based on original reporting and writing. Fundamental skills still matter, and we dinosaurs have had a lot of practice at honing them.

All of which bodes well for my next 10 years as a freelancer, I think. And it is, more than anything else, what I plan to celebrate on this particular anniversary.

Members To Judge Again at IBEX



BWI's Alan Wendt in foreground with a recent group of Innovation Awardees.

The International Boatbuilders' Exhibition and Conference (IBEX) announced a panel of seven BWI members to judge the 2013 IBEX Innovation Awards. The awards honor excellence in product development in 13 areas of the marine industry, including boatbuilding methods and materials, inboard and outboard engines, hardware, interior parts and furnishings, and safety equipment. Judges may also present an award to any entry that provides an environmental benefit to the marine industry.

Entries for the Awards are due by August 16. The winners will be announced at the Industry Breakfast on the first morning of IBEX: Tuesday, September 17. All entries will be displayed for the three days of the show in the Innovation Awards New Product Showcase.

The judges this year are:

- Zuzana Prochazka, freelance writer and photographer for publications such as *BoatU.S. Magazine*, *Sail*, *Sea*, *Yachtworld.com*, *Boats.com* and others. Prochazka holds a USCG 100 Ton Masters license, is

immediate past president of BWI, and editor of her gear and boat review website, TalkoftheDock.com.

- Pete Robson, freelance writer and former editor of *Pacific Yachting* magazine. Robson has been active in the recreational and commercial boating industry for over 40 years, including board service for the British Columbia Marine Trades Association.

- Alan Wendt, First Vice President of BWI, former editor of *Marine CEO*, and publisher of two boating lifestyle magazines, *Adventure* and *Getaways!*. Wendt has judged the Innovation Awards entries for the past 12 consecutive years.

- Beth Leonard, Director of Technical Services for and Technical Editor for all BoatU.S. Publications including *BoatU.S. Magazine*. Leonard also is the editor of *Seaworthy*, a publication dedicated to vessel seaworthiness, and is the author of

three books.

- Frank Lanier, an accredited marine surveyor with 35 years of experience in the industry. Lanier holds a USCG 100 Ton Masters license and is an FCC licensed electronics technician. His work is regularly featured in *Practical Sailor*, *Southern Boating*, *Sea*, *Lakeland Boating* and *Boating World*.

- Nigel Calder, author of *Boatowner's Mechanical and Electrical Manual* and *Marine Diesel Engines* and a contributing editor to *Professional BoatBuilder* magazine. Calder has written hundreds of magazine articles and in recent years has become the technical coordinator of a European Union marine hybrid propulsion project.

- Ben Ellison, journalist focusing on marine electronics. He is the editor of Panbo.com, a marine electronics website, and his work appears in *Power & Motor Yacht*, *Sail*, *Soundings*, *Passagemaker* and *Yachts International*.

Advertising Offered in BWI Annual Directory

BWI will be accepting advertising in the BWI Annual Directory published this summer. The Directory is distributed to all current Active, Associate and Supporting members, numbering approximately 350 with another 50 or more copies distributed during the year as new members sign on.

The Directory, in a PDF format, offers reduced pricing of \$250 per full page (7w- x 10h-inches) or \$150 per horizontal half-page (7w- x 5h-inches), available in those units only. These prices are only available to Supporting Members. Materials will be needed in mid-August. To reserve space or for more information, contact Executive Director Greg Proteau at info@bwi.org, 847/736-4142.

Supporting Member News

Schwartz Hands Off Daily Work at BoatUS

BoatUS chairman and founder Richard Schwartz, 83, has retired from a 47-year run as the leader of the half-million-member boating association, effective July 1. He passes the day-to-day torch to staff, but

ent ways, could unite to solve their challenges. It is an all-inclusive approach to recreational boating issues that got results and this philosophy will remain the core of BoatUS." Contact Scott Croft, SCroft@BoatUS.com.

Sea Tow Reports Busiest July 4th

This year's extended July 4th weekend was the busiest in the 30-year history of Sea Tow Services International, Inc. Its national Dispatch Center recorded a 12 percent increase in calls over a similar five-day holiday period from July 2-6, 2012. More than 100 of the calls were made using the Sea Tow Mobile App. The number one assistance request was for boat tows followed by fuel delivery and jump starts in second and third place, respectively, with ungroundings running a close fourth. More than 38 percent of Sea Tow Captains across the country provided a salvage or recovery service during the long weekend. Contact Cindy McCaffery, cindymccaffery@seatow.com

Interlux Spurs Wood Self-Built Boats

Interlux sponsored the "I Built It Myself" trailerable wooden boat competition at the late June WoodenBoat Show at Mystic Seaport in Mystic, CT. The annual event is said to be one of the most popular at the show, attracting as many as 50 boats and proud owners/builders. In previous years, the collection has included kayaks, skiffs, daysailers, ca-



noes and much more by a variety of designers such as Iain Oughtred, Joel White, Chesapeake Light Craft, Arch Davis and William & John Atkin. "It's remarkable and inspiring to see so many finely and obviously, lovingly, built and finished boats in one place," said Marketing Manager Jim Seidel. Visit www.yachtpaint.com.

Customers Share Xantrex Power Stories

Xantrex Technology has launched a customer-focused initiative called "My X-Perience" which enables product users to share their story and brand experience. The company has a history of over three decades of design and manufacturing providing customers solutions for their onboard AC power and battery charging needs. "We captured many interesting stories on camera and decided to launch a full-fledged campaign on our website and social media outlets," said Mitul Chandrani, Marketing Manager. View the videos at www.xantrex.com/power-products-support/video-gallery.aspx under the "My Experience Tab." Contact Chandrani, mitul.chandrani@schneider-electric.com.



Schwartz heading to his favorite crab shack.

remains chairman of the Board of Directors and BoatUS National Advisory Council.

Schwartz helped found and served on the National Safe Boating Council and has received a wide range of awards, including: the Council's Hall of Fame Award; the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators' Annual and Lifetime Achievement Awards; U.S. Coast Guard's Distinguished Public Service Commendation; U.S. Power Squadron's Sea Scout Service Award; and NMMA's Charles S. Chapman Award.

"Richard changed the game for boaters at a time when no one was looking out for them," said BoatUS president Margaret Podlich. "He proved that boaters, who come from all walks of life and enjoy being on the water so many differ-

Events & Resources



"Boat Essentials-USCG Safety Gear" is a free, simple checklist for the new

maintenance guideline alerts, access supplies list, remind of important dates. Access at itunes.apple.com/us/app/boat-essentials-uscg-safety/id646883799?mt=8; or in paper form at www.abycinc.org/mobileapps.

"First Mate" Online Safety Course Debuts

Two boating education organizations with a history of making boating education easy and affordable, have teamed up to offer a fully interactive online seminar for First Mates who may find themselves needing to take command of the family boat. "Partner in Command," from the US Power Squadrons (USPS), in partnership with the BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety, has a goal to acquaint the First Mate with basic skills he or she may need in an emergency. The seminar is available online at www.usps.org/edonline at a discounted cost for either group, USCG and Great Lakes Cruising Club.

or experienced boater, to help them identify the safety items required to have on-board. It was developed through a Coast Guard Recreational Boating Safety Non-profit Grant by Ken Cook Company, includes suggestions to make the boat safer and more comfortable and can be used on powered and non-powered boats that operate in U.S. The app can store information on up to 3 boats, file and save float plans, add boating contacts, receive

Journal Skips August

August is the traditional month of rest for this newsletter, though it is also the time for production of the Annual Directory. All members in good standing are included in it, along with a variety of other association information.

Two online directories are also available on www.bwi.org under the "Directories" tab: the opt-in Active & Associate member directory and another maintained by BWI listing Supporting Members, their key contacts and details.

New Boating Safety Checklist in App Form

A new iPhone app has been released by the American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC).

Electronics Expo Set for Late September

The National Marine Electronics Association's International Marine Electronics Conference and Expo will be held September 25-28 in San Diego, CA at the Sheraton Hotel and Marina. The event follows the reorganized Expo last year providing more educational and business opportunities. Expo will be held in the same week and location as the Radio Technical Commission for Maritime Services Conference. An 11,000 sq. ft. exhibit area will provide space for manufacturers to unveil new products. Exhibits will be open in afternoons when education tracks are complete.

Writers can register for the event by contacting Cindy Love or Debbie Compere at 410/975-9425 or visit www.NMEA.org.

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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.