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Upside of Downer Winter

Had enough winter yet? This photo went viral a few weeks ago. I won't be surprised if a boat dealer in Florida repackages the concept and runs an ad next January promoting their factory direct store where you can test drive a new boat year round.

No question this winter is one for the record books. According to an analysis by NOAA's Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory, ice cover peaked at 92 percent of the Lakes on March 6. Only February 1979 (95 percent) had more ice.

The past four years peak ice coverage was around 40 percent, while the 40-year average peak ice coverage each winter is right around the 50 percent mark.

Normally this type of news wouldn't bother me. I live in Florida, we already had our two weeks of winter, and I used one of the weeks to haul the boat for annual maintenance. But for magazine editors, this ice pack is hindering writers wanting to test new models. The water could be hard right up to Memorial Day. For retailers who need to clear boats off the parking lot, peel back the shrink wrap and get customers ready for spring launch at marinas, the winter delay is going to play



havoc with overtime costs.

Since I'm a "silver-lining" type of guy, I asked the scientists for the upside. Lake levels are going to be up this summer, predicts The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Significantly – like 13 inches higher on Lake Superior than 2013 and potentially topping March long-term average levels for the first time in 16 years. The reason is the heavy snowpack around many of the Great Lakes. Snowmelt will replenish recently low levels.

The past few years many marina owners and municipalities paid thousands of dollars to dredge and maintain docks. An extra foot of water has the potential of adding value to the saying, a rising tide lifts all boats.

A Writing Resource ...
All of the top three honored articles in the 2013 Writing

Contest can now be reviewed via links on the BWI website on the Contest page. Listings by category, writer and publication/site of dollar-winning entries can be accessed there, <http://bwi.org/bwicontest/2014winners.htm>. A click then downloads the PDFs that were submitted by entrants (without 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 recipients (those who scored within 95 percent of the third-place awardees). Contest sponsors are also noted there.

... and A Correction

Last month in these pages we introduced you to Johnny Lindstrom and his views on the vibrant marine electronics market, but we assigned an incorrect title to him. He is the new Chairman of the Board and acting Executive Director of the National Marine Electronics Association, not the President. We regret the error.

You can reach me at Alan@wendtproductions.com.

Alan Wendt
BWI President

Salt Water Fishing Plan Unveiled

A landmark report produced by the Commission on Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Management presents a new paradigm for conserving marine fishing resources while producing the full range of saltwater recreational fishing's economic, social and conservation benefits.

Introduced at the Miami Boat Show in February, "A Vision for Managing America's Saltwater Recreational Fisheries" outlines the nation's most important fisheries management issues and is intended to help guide federal policy decisions, particularly as Congress debates the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the law that governs the nation's marine fisheries.

Co-chaired by Bass Pro Shops Founder and CEO

Johnny Morris and Maverick Boats President Scott Deal, the commission, composed of biologists, economists, conservationists, fisheries managers and policy makers, developed specific management recommendations for keeping saltwater recreational fishing sustainable and healthy. The commission advanced an innovative and results-oriented approach to marine fisheries management.

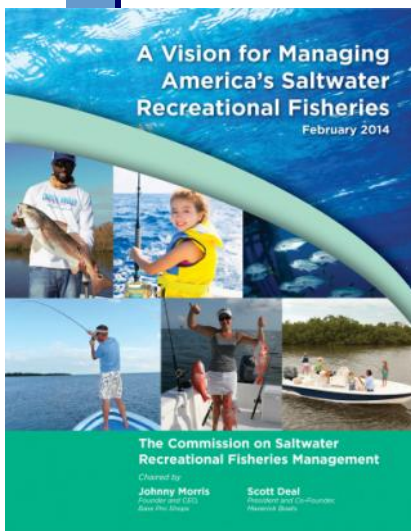
The economic imprint of saltwater angling in the U.S. is considerable. In 2011, approximately 11 million Americans saltwater fished recreationally, spending \$27 billion in pursuit of their sport. That activity generated more than \$70 billion in economic output and sustained 450,000 jobs. Anglers contribute more than \$1.5 billion annually to fisheries habitat

and conservation via excise taxes and license fees alone.

The report identifies six policies that would achieve the commission's vision. Recommendations primarily focus on the Magnuson-Stevens Act and include:

- Establishing a national policy for recreational fishing
- Adopting a revised approach to saltwater recreational fisheries management
- Allocating marine fisheries for the greatest benefit to the nation
- Creating reasonable latitude in stock rebuilding timelines
- Codifying a process for cooperative management
- Managing for the forage base

To see the report, go to <http://www.trcp.org/assets/pdf/Visioning-Report-fnl-web.pdf>.



Marketers Present Neptune Awards

Marine Marketers of America (MMA) presented its Neptune Awards during the Miami Boat Show. Seventeen judges from all sectors of the industry selected "best marketing work in the North American marine marketplace." Sally Helme of The Sailing Company, MMA vice president and Neptune Awards co-chair, noted "There was a dynamic mix of both B2B and B2C entries, which speaks to the importance of both strong distribution and retail support."

Awards presented to BWI Supporting Members and/or

their marketing firms included:

- Best National Magazine Advertising (Series): Sea Tow Services International for "Benefits of Sea Tow Membership."
- Best Regional/Local Advertising: Legendary Marine for "#1 Dealer in North America Campaign," created by Legendary Marine and Kenton Smith Marketing
- Best Social Media Campaign: Mercury Marine for "#HandsomeTransom"
- Best Digital Newsletter for "Sea Tow News", created by Sea Tow in collaboration

with Turnkey Communications & Public Relations, Inc.

- Best Event Marketing/Sales Promotion: Freedom Boat Club for "Yelp It Out for Sales"
- Best Marketing Innovation: ACR Artex for "406SurvivorClub"
- Best Email Blast: Sea Tow for "Sea Tow Trial Membership Program."
- Best Web Ads: Mercury Marine for "Meet the Team."



Member News

Mercury Is Wisconsin Manufacturer of Year

Mercury Marine was named 2013 Wisconsin Manufacturer of the Year in February by Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce. The firm took top honors in the Mega category, which recognizes companies with more than 750 employees; it employs 5,400 people worldwide, with 3,100 employees in the state. Mercury is the largest division of Brunswick Corporation, has manufactured more than 11 million boat engines during its 75-year history, and its global sales in 2013 totaled \$2.1 billion.

In a separate announcement, Mercury announced the addition of Lee Gordon as Director of Public Relations. He joins the company from a career as a television anchor for CBS and FOX affiliates across the country. Contact Gordon at lee.gordon@mercmarine.com.

Major FL Brokerage Joins My-Villages

My-Villages has announced that Bradford Marine, a shipyard and brokerage in Fort Lauderdale and the Bahamas, will use The Boat Village, a mobile platform that simplifies communication and collaboration, to make it easier for owners to coordinate service and maintain their vessels. Bradford will make The Boat Village Premium Service available to all of their customers, allowing them to create a digital profile for the vessel and its equipment, including a cus-

tom maintenance plan based on manufacturer recommendations. Also, owners can receive reminders when maintenance is due. Contact Tammy Lewis, tammy.lewis@my-villages.com.

Volvo Penta Offers Oil Analysis Program

Volvo Penta of the Americas is offering customers an Oil Analysis Program designed to make it easy to obtain expert diagnostics of engine oil. The program is available for all Volvo Penta diesel and gas engines to provide a basic driveline "health check" yielding a wealth of information on what's going on inside. With this information, maintenance is more effectively planned and risk of unplanned downtime and repair expenses is reduced. Volvo will also maintain a website containing a history of all oil reports for each engine to track lifetime wear. Contact Lindsay Shrewsberry, lindsay.shrewsberry@volvo.com.

Lady Anglers Catch New Skills

More than seventy women from ages 16 to 84 joined together to learn fishing skills at the "Ladies, Let's Go Fishing!" Ft. Myers/Matlacha University in early March. Women traveled from as far as Arizona, Canada and Michigan to join others from Florida to share the joys of learning how to fish. Held in conjunction with support from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) through the

Sport Fish Restoration Program, the University offered education, hands-on fishing activities, habitat conservation, networking and an optional fishing trip. Upcoming sessions include April 11-13/ South Florida, May 16-18/ Treasure Coast and Nov. 14-16/Florida Keys/Tavernier/ Islamorada. Contact info@ladiesletsgofishing.com.

Beneteau at 130, Moves to New HQ

In 1884, Benjamin Beneteau, a qualified shipbuilder, founded the Beneteau boatyard in the village of Croix-de-Vie to build trawlers for fishermen. Since then, the business has evolved to become a major player

in the manufacture of sailboats and powerboats. Recently, the firm has moved to a new building located in Vendée on the French Atlantic Coast, where it all started. Consisting of two low-lying buildings, linked by a gallery, the contemporary structure was designed by in-house engineers, Beri 21, together with architects. The main facade is made of glass and a perforated resin screen that uses light effects to create a seahorse, Beneteau's logo. Contact Maryline O'Shea, m.oshea@beneteau.com.



Sail Market Made Gains in 2013

Cruising World and *Sailing World* magazines, the sailing brands of Bonnier Corp.'s marine group, released their annual State of the Sailing Market report at the Miami Boat Show in February. Over 100 sailing industry members heard publisher Sally Helme present key North American sailing industry statistics. 2013 was a positive year across the board for the sailing market based on data collected from over 200 sailboat builders, importers and bareboat charter companies.

Bareboat charters booked out of the North American market were up 15% over 2012 to 21,495 weeks, with strong gains for popular sailing destinations in the Caribbean and overseas. Sailboat imports into North America saw a significant increase last year, up 55% for boats over 20 feet in length compared to 2012. Domestic production of sailboats over 20' also grew, up 7% versus the previous year. Multihulls comprised 38% of imported sailboats and 20% of all sailboats built in North America. Small sailboats under 20' were the only category which was off, losing 16% in terms of units produced in the US.



For the first time the report included data on the sales of brokerage sailboats in the U.S., based on data supplied by Dominion Marine Media's YachtWorld. YachtWorld's member brokerages reported through Sold-Boats.com that unit sales of brokerage sailboats were up 5% in 2013 vs. 2012. For the complete report go to: www.cruisingworld.com/news/the-state-of-the-sailing-industry-2014-sailing-market-study.

Sail America Names BWI-ers to Board

In a related industry development, Sail America, the trade association for the U.S. sailing industry, elected two BWI members to its 2014 Board of Directors.

Mark Pillsbury is the Editor of *Cruising World* magazine

and its related digital publications, all based in Newport, RI. *Cruising World*, which celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2014, focuses on the sailing and live-aboard lifestyle, offers technical, hands-on advice about seamanship,

maintenance, and other technical topics, and is the go-to source for new boat information.

Ben Wold is the Executive Vice-President for the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), assuming the role in 1999. He is responsible for the production of the 22 consumer boat and sportsmans shows produced by NMMA throughout the U.S. each year.

Continuing on the Board is Laurent Fabre of Beneteau America.



Pillsbury (above) and Wold



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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.