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## Seeking Others' Perspectives

When my wife Susan and I started publishing magazines for the boat business we often traveled together to visit clients. The industry was dominated by men, and while Susan may have been the brains behind an idea, we never knew which one of us would be the best fit for the client.

Among the lessons we learned from working boat shows and attending manufacturer new product roll outs was that a woman's point of view rarely factored into the design process. Worse yet, salesmen, and I use the gender designation purposely, were mostly condescending towards the Admiral who in most modern boating families yields veto power.

Fast forward a generation and today's better trained sales team reports an uptick in more deals going south because "she" didn't feel comfortable about the layout. Boating designers are taking this economic reset time to map new areas of the buying process. The better ones are meticulously examining and reacting to this next generation of boater by adding innovation for him and meaningful ergonomics for her. In short they are doing a better job of listening to both of the decision makers.

This point was illustrated in



**Wendt on assignment ... A man's bilge is his castle.**

detail to me recently on Lake Michigan while testing Tiara's 50 Coupe. Near level flooring, few steps, pleasing decorator style interior finishes, ease of clean up, all were designed specifically to entice "her."

Aside from journalistic curiosity, all those features were nice, but I noticed how I was still drawn to the helm, the Glass Cockpit System, the Star Trek command seating and something as simple as LED illuminated cup holders. Was I no longer in touch with my feminine side?

Wait. That came out wrong.

No, I once again recognized why having input from the opposite sex made sense. The ladies on the photo shoot, art director and photographer, were quick to acknowledge the lifestyle possibilities that such a layout presented. Not

one was interested in joystick docking, the 40" flat screen mounted on a hi-lo actuator, or the concealed bilge camera that kept an NSA like vigil on the 750 HP stable below.

As writers, I wonder if our stories would sometime benefit if we took someone else along for the ride. Sure they need some knowledge, but most of us have spouses that enjoy the boating lifestyle too. Maybe we invest a few hours at a boat show hanging around a particular model slated for review, observing what couples notice. As the industry tries to embrace Hispanics and other cultures, how do they react to boat designs of today? Sometimes it makes sense to ask for another person's observation and opinion.

Which provides a nice segue into our important story in this month's *Journal*, results of our member survey. Former BWI President's Michael Sciulla, Zuzana Prochazka and Executive Director Greg Proteau have shepherded this effort and uncovered interesting trends about topics that have risen to prominence as it pertains to practicing our craft.

You can reach me at [Alan@wendtproductions.com](mailto:Alan@wendtproductions.com).

*Alan Wendt*  
*BWI President*

# Member Survey Results Now & Then

Boating journalists are doing a good job keeping up with the technological, product and structural changes taking place in the marine industry they cover, but there are significantly fewer writers and they are growing older and poorer in the process. This thumbnail sketch reflects results from the recent survey of BWI members compared with a similar analysis made five years ago. This year, 85 of 300 Active members (those who are active writers and communicators) provided feedback; in 2009, 95 of 400 Active members provided responses. The 25 percent drop in BWI membership in that time frame is reflective of significant consolidation in both the recreational marine and boating publishing industries.

Members report widespread participation in the shift to digital in writing, running their businesses and promoting themselves. Close to half (46%) maintain their own websites, one third are active with blogs and forums, and 18% are posting videos on line. They are engaged on Facebook (70%), LinkedIn (67%), Google (40%) and Twitter (25%).

Magazines continue to be the primary clients for writers, noted by 79% of respondents in '14 and 83% in '09, while blogging and website development work increased to 40% from 27% in the same period. Other notable changes in revenue sources shifted in marketing/advertising work to 28% from 9%, videography to 17% from 10%, and book

## What work do you primarily perform in the marine industry:

Answer Options	2009	2014
Magazine writing	82.5%	78.5%
News writing	30.1%	35.7%
Book writing	16.8%	21.4%
Newsletter writing	23.1%	20.2%
Editing	39.9%	36.9%
Public relations	23.1%	21.4%
Marketing/Advtg	9.1%	28.5%
Photography	39.9%	42.8%
Videography	10.5%	16.6%
Television	4.9%	2.3%
Radio	3.5%	1.1%
Blogging	10.5%	25.0%
Website development or tech work	16.1%	15.4%
Other	11.9%	9.5%

writing to 21% from 17%.

Revenue reported from newsletters, editing, public relations, TV and radio decreased in the period.

BWI membership continues to be populated by 70% men and 30% women, little changed over the past five years. The largest age group, 38%, moved into the 60-70-year range from the 50-60-year range, now 25%, in the

period. Under 50 members now total 19% while the over 70 crowd grew to 15% from 9%. Annual income generally shifted downward, reflected in 29% of the writers reporting less than \$10,000, the largest category, followed by those making \$20K - \$30K (9% down from 13%) and \$30K - \$40K (unchanged at 8%). Three other income categories increased, led by \$60K - \$70K to 8% from 6%. Overall, the income change from 2012 to 2013 was reported by roughly equal thirds of the members as up, down or the same.

Members are loyal to the association, with 41% saying they have been aboard for more than 10 years, 24% for 5 to 9 years, and 34% for more than 3 years. Top reasons for joining or continuing membership are cited, in order, as networking, gaining information on the profession and industry, that BWI is their primary trade group, to

participate in the writing contest, to participate in the organization, and to have an online directory presence.

Satisfaction with the association comes from 39% of members with another 36% saying they are very satisfied; 41% find the BWI website informative and useful, 16% find it very useful.

Asked how BWI can help to improve their endeavors, members pointed to better understanding social networking and new tech-

## What services would you most like BWI to provide? (Choose three)

Answer Options	2009	2014
Information on jobs and freelance opportunities	68.5%	60.7%
News on the marine industry	26.6%	28.5%
News on marine publishing	44.1%	46.4%
Networking opportunities with BWI members	36.4%	39.2%
Networking opportunities with marine industry	40.6%	39.2%
Continuing Webinars on topics of interest	40.6%	26.1%
Seminar to understand technology in boat	--	5.9%
Learning details of monetizing blogs/websites	--	41.6%
Reduced rates on consultation with an attorney	14.0%	4.7%
Form letters, primers and other legal resources	14.0%	3.5%
Other	9.8%	1.0%

*continued next page*

# Member Survey Results *continued*

nologies, marketing their work to traditional and digital publishing outlets and improving their blogging potential. They also seek more information on jobs and freelancing opportunities, ways to better monetize their digital efforts, and greater networking with their peers and industry personnel.

Legal issues are less of a concern by the writers with 39% saying they have no interest in them, compared with 21% saying "no interest" in '09. The top legal issues now are contracts (15%), theft of copyrighted material (12%), being sued (11%), and taxes (10%).

In terms of the writing contest, members said they intend to enter future work in, in order, Boat Projects/Renovations, Boat Tests & Reviews, Online, and Gear/Product Tests categories. Asked about interest in potential new categories, 46% said they might try Photography, 26% said "Series of Articles," 24% said Books, 18%

### Rank the reasons you joined BWI (1 = Lowest)

Answer Options	2009	2014
It's my primary professional association	9	7
To participate in the writing contest	7	6
To gain the information provided	6	8
To participate in the organization	5	5
To network with others in the industry	8	9
To access the member card/directory	4	3
To access the BWI Member LinkedIn Site	--	2
To have an Online Directory presence	--	4
Other:		
To attend the annual meeting in Miami		
To improve my writing		
To serve as a judge [of writing contest or for new products]		

said Cruising Guides; also suggested was a Video category.

For a more complete look at the findings including "other" responses from members, go to the homepage at [www.bwi.org](http://www.bwi.org)

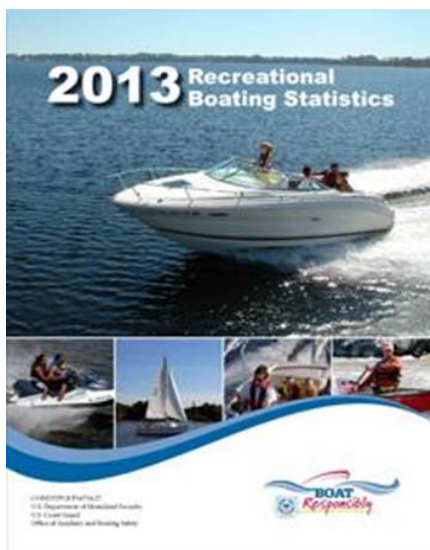
### What online activities do you engage in regularly, meaning at least once a week?

Answer Options	2009	2014
Maintaining my own website	--	46.4%
Posting to a blog	24.2%	32.3%
Posting videos (e.g., YouTube)	--	18.3%
Commenting on articles/ blogs	25.8%	23.9%
Posting on a forum	35.0%	32.3%
Posting on a social network	40.0%	56.3%

# Boating Safety Gains, Cautions Remain

The U.S. Coast Guard, which recently released its 2013 recreational boating statistics report, said that boating fatalities last year were the lowest number on record. The report said that 560 people died on boats last year, a decrease of 14% compared to 2012. Injuries also fell from 3,000 in 2012 to 2,620 last year. The fatality rate for 2013 of 4.7 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels reflected a 13% decrease from the previous year's rate of 5.4 deaths per 100,000 vessels. Property damage totaled approximately \$39 million.

Statistics also revealed that alcohol use was the leading factor in 16% of deaths. Operator inattention, improper



lookout, operator inexperience, excessive speed and machinery failure ranked as the top five primary contributing factors in accidents.

Drownings were the cause of death in 77% of victims,

and of those, 84% were not wearing a life jacket. The most common types of vessels involved in reported accidents were open motorboats, personal watercraft and cabin motorboats.

"We are pleased that there have been fewer accidents on waterways in recent years and thank our partners for their work," said Coast Guard Capt. Jon Burton, director of inspections and compliance. "Together we will continue to stress the importance of life jacket use, boating education courses and sober boating."

The full report is available online: [www.uscgboating.org/assets/1/AssetManager/2013/RecBoatingStats.pdf](http://www.uscgboating.org/assets/1/AssetManager/2013/RecBoatingStats.pdf).



# Active & Associate Member News

## Bree's Sail Book Now in Audio Form

Marlin Bree's nonfiction work, *In the Teeth of the Northeaster*, has become a new audio book. Narrated by Patrick Conn, who has done audio work for Discovery Channel's *Deadliest Catch* series, the unabridged version

is 6 hours and 52 minutes. The audio book recounts how the ex-*Minneapolis Tribune* newsman built his wooden sailboat, sailed it alone on Lake Superior and describes the lore of the lake. The book was originally published as a hardcover by Clarkson N. Potter, division of Ran-

dom House, and then as a paperback by Marlor Press, Inc. The new edition can be reviewed by contacting New Street Communications, Wickford, RI. It sells for \$19.95 including on Amazon. Contact Bree at [marlin.marlor@minn.net](mailto:marlin.marlor@minn.net).

## DuRant Continues With SC Marine Trade

BWI member Suzi DuRant, who has been serving as the South Carolina Marine Association's executive director, will remain in that position since the statewide group has integrated with and is now NMMA South Carolina. To guide the specific needs of members which include marine manufacturers, dealers and retailers, SCMA's Board of Directors will become an Advisory Board to NMMA while DuRant will remain

involved to ensure the needs of the South Carolina boating community are being addressed. Contact DuRant at [sdurant@nmma.org](mailto:sdurant@nmma.org).

## ESD Prevention Gets Promo Push

The American Boat & Yacht Council's Foundation (ABYC) is partnering with the Energy Education Council's Safe Electricity "Teach Learn Care TLC" campaign to help prevent Electric Shock Drowning (ESD). The safety messages include proper maintenance of boats' electrical systems and safe actions in the water. "We are very impressed with the Energy Education Council and their outreach efforts on this and other electrical safety issues," said BWI member John Adey, ABYC president. He noted that a recent grant by the National Fire Protection Association's Research Foundation and support from ABYC will fund an expert investigation for solutions on the dockside mitigation of this hazard. See the TLC information at [www.safeelectricity.org/component/content/article/1589](http://www.safeelectricity.org/component/content/article/1589). Contact Nina Ullrich, [nullrich@abycinc.org](mailto:nnullrich@abycinc.org).

## Dominion, Boatbound Form Sharing Effort

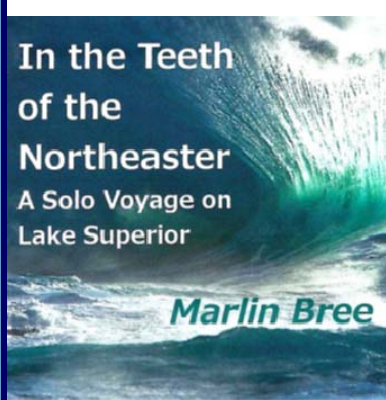
Dominion Marine Media (BoatTrader.com, boats.com, and YachtWorld.com) has announced a partnership with peer-to-peer boat rental marketplace, Boatbound. This is expected to introduce Boatbound to the nearly 5 million unique monthly visitors of Dominion owned properties,



connecting boat buyers with boat sellers. BoatTrader research indicates 69% of its visitors own a boat and 19% are shopping for one. The partnership aims to stimulate the boating economy by leveraging Boatbound's platform to make boating more accessible. "We are very much committed to finding new ways to grow the number of boating participants wherever possible," said Ian Atkins, senior vice president and general manager of Dominion. For more detail, visit [www.dominionenterprises.com/news](http://www.dominionenterprises.com/news).

## ChartGuides Releases New eBook Version

The two-volume series, *AnchorGuide for the Intracoastal Waterway*, a paper cruising guide, is now available in complete, downloadable, digital format on the iTunes - Books Store. Explains author Diana Doyle, "We reorganized as a new non-profit organization dedicated to producing 'Almost Free' cruising guides for the Intracoastal Waterway." The first step was dropping the price of the printed versions from \$29.95 to \$9.95. The second step offers ebook editions at \$3.99. Contact Doyle at [diana@semi-local.com](mailto:diana@semi-local.com).



# Supporting Member News

## DiscoverBoating.com Spring Traffic Surge

A new [DiscoverBoating.com](http://DiscoverBoating.com) was launched in mid-May showcasing the brand's new look and featuring new content, easy to use navigation, and interactive tools. The website is also now compatible with any tablet or mobile device. Visits since October 2013 have increased 40%



compared to the same time period last year, and it ranks number one on Google organic search. The average amount of time people are spending on the site also increased by 42% to more than two minutes and most visited content includes anything related to buying a new boat: the boat selector tool, boat finance calculator, boat brands search pages, etc.

## Mercury Presented Environment Award

Mercury Marine was presented a Wisconsin Business Friend of the Environment Award in mid-May. The Awards highlight the actions companies are taking in the areas of pollution prevention, innovative technology and environmental stewardship. "Our passion for sustainability continues to evolve, not just in our products, but in our people and our processes," said John Pfeifer, president of Mercury Marine. "We are honored to be given this award, especially as we celebrate our 75th Anniver-

sary this year." In April, Mercury won the Most Eco-Friendly Marine Business Award at the China International Boat Show. Contact Lee Gordon, [lee.gordon@mercmarine.com](mailto:lee.gordon@mercmarine.com).

## Early Signups for Boat Village Top 1,000

The Boat Village, the marine industry's online service coordination and boat management tool, is now more than 1,000 boaters strong in advance of its official launch to boat owners in Southeast Florida, New England and other parts of the country. The free online community allows owners to coordinate service with technicians; search for information, share tips and tricks; and find service recommendations from manufacturers or others in the industry. Businesses including The Hinckley Co., Regal, Ferretti Group, Galati Yacht Sales, Bradford Marine, Westerbeke, MTU and MarineMax Vacations utilize the service. Contact Tammy Lewis, [tammy.lewis@my-villages.com](mailto:tammy.lewis@my-villages.com).

## Interlux & Awlgrip Move To New Plants

AkzoNobel's Yacht Coatings business announced that it will cease operations in New Jersey. Production of the Interlux® brand will be transferred to Houston, TX where the company manufactures marine and protective coatings for North America. Awlgrip® production will transfer to a facility at Sasenheim in the Netherlands.

AkzoNobel had already moved the global headquarters of the yacht business to Houston where it hosts laboratory, sales, customer service and marketing. Contact Elenor Ekman, [Elenor.Ekman@AkzoNobel.com](mailto:Elenor.Ekman@AkzoNobel.com).

## Sabre Yachts # 3000 48 Salon Express

The very first Sabre yacht, a 28 sailboat, was sold in 1971 at a retail price with options for \$14,335. In 1997, the 2000th boat was a Sabre 402 sailing yacht. The firm in April delivered the 3000th Sabre, a 48 Salon Express, to Boston Yacht Sales of North Weymouth, MA. Times have changed, and Sabre Yachts today builds powerboat models in a range from 38 to 54 feet with a 66 footer under development. At its two facilities in Raymond, ME, Sabre employs 160 associates who build four models from 38 to 54 feet in length. Sabre's sister company, Back Cove Yachts, of Rockland, ME, employs 150 associates building the 30, 34, 37 and the newly introduced 41. Contact Sarah Stern, [sstern@sabreyachts.com](mailto:sstern@sabreyachts.com).



**Sabre associates with hull #3000, a 48' Salon Express**

# Sales Gains Forecast for Season

NMMA has reported that the recreational boating industry saw healthy growth in 2013, generating \$36.7 billion in retail expenditures (new and pre-owned boats and engines, trailers, accessories and services), a 3.2% increase from 2012. An estimated 166,800 new powerboats and sailboats were sold at retail in 2013, an increase of 2.2%, building on gains in 2012 when new powerboat and sailboat retail sales increased 10.7% - the industry's first sign of recovery. NMMA is anticipating an additional 5-7% increase in retail sales of new boats in 2014. Findings are in the U.S. Recreational Boating Statistical Abstract being released June 1.

"As the nation's economic recovery matures and boating businesses prepare for summer, a peak selling season for recreational boats, accessories and services, we expect to see continued stable growth in sales," noted NMMA president Thom Dammrich. "Following a year of inclement weather throughout the U.S. driving pent-up demand and Americans taking to the water in record numbers, the industry is primed for a busy selling season."

Ski and wakeboard boats



recorded an 11% increase in new units sold at retail in 2013 to 6,100. Outboard boats (pontoons, fishing boats and small family cruisers) were the most popular type of new powerboat sold in 2013, comprising 84% of the powerboat market and up 5% to 134,800 units.

The personal watercraft (PWC) category increased 2% compared to 2012 with 39,400 sales; and inboard cruisers sales gained 10% to

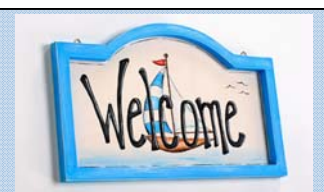
2,200 new units sold in 2013. 2013 was also the first time since pre-recession (2009) that the ratio of pre-owned boat to new boat sales decreased, indicating a shift in consumer demand for new boats.

Of the 241.9 million adults in the U.S., 36.6%, or 88.5 million, participated in recreational boating at least once during 2013 - the second highest percentage on record. Fishing from a boat remained the most popular activity during 2013: 57.8% fished, 19.3% canoed, tubing attracted 17.8% and water-skiing 14.6%.

The top ten boating states and sales for 2013 were (in millions \$):

- Florida, \$1,931.4, +14%;
- Texas, \$1,170.1, -2.2%
- Michigan, \$651.9, +1%
- Delaware, \$567.2, +17.7%
- Minnesota, \$554.5, +0.2%
- New York, \$547.9, +1.8%
- Wisconsin, \$516.3, -0.5%
- North Carolina, \$505.5, +2.9%
- Louisiana, \$475.7, -5%
- California, \$428.9, +16.9%.

Contact Sarah Ryser, [sryser@nmma.org](mailto:sryser@nmma.org).



### Active Member

Ross Tibbits, Racing Editor,  
Mill Valley, CA

### Supporting Member

Tim Poppell, President,  
Island Boats, Inc.,  
Vero Beach, FL

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.

## BWI OFFICERS

### President

**Alan Wendt ('15)**

[awendt@wendtproductions.com](mailto:awendt@wendtproductions.com)

### 1st Vice President

**Lindsey Johnson ('16)**

[ljohnson@lakelandboating.com](mailto:ljohnson@lakelandboating.com)

### 2nd Vice President

**Lenny Rudow ('14)**

[ultangler@aol.com](mailto:ultangler@aol.com)

## BWI DIRECTORS

**Michael Sciulla ('15)**

[msciulla@gmail.com](mailto:msciulla@gmail.com)

**Alan Jones ('16)**

[boatscribe@comcast.net](mailto:boatscribe@comcast.net)

**Roger McAfee ('15)**

[skeenaboss@telus.net](mailto:skeenaboss@telus.net)

**Heather Steinberger ('14)**

[heather@writeonllc.com](mailto:heather@writeonllc.com)

**Zuzana Prochazka ('16)**

[totemgroup@msn.com](mailto:totemgroup@msn.com)

## BWI Past President

**John Wooldridge**

[jwooldr715@gmail.com](mailto:jwooldr715@gmail.com)

## Executive Director

**Greg Proteau**

[info@bwi.org](mailto:info@bwi.org)

