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Media View Capital “Gains”

Many of our members are out in this early summer season enjoying media meetings hosted by the manufacturing community. There seems to be anecdotal evidence at least that these gatherings are more numerous and meatier than in the past few years. Maybe it reflects the recovery, albeit slow, in both the general economy and our industry. It ties in well with anniversary celebrations, Mercury's 75th and Suzuki's 50th, among them.

There is another underlying positive trend perhaps less noticeable, and that is the capital investment being made by many companies to enhance engineering capability, improve manufacturing efficiency and strive for better quality and “friendlier” marine products for consumers. We're seeing it in electronics, engines, propulsion systems and even basic maintenance items like paint. Investments are also being made in acquisitions again, notably Beneteau's purchase of several powerboat brands to extend its reach (see story inside).

What does it mean to us as journalists? For starters, it gives us more to pitch, report and write about, it reflects that the stalwart marine firms – the survivors if you will – still believe in the lifestyle and expect consumers to respond



Wendt at last year's IBEX

to their plans and investments, and it should make us feel better about the potential of the industry.

A central place where much of the industry's activity is showcased is the International Boat Builders Exhibition, or IBEX, held in Tampa this year in late September. The BWI Board has been considering having a member event there to key in on the recent survey findings that networking with colleagues and industry folks is a high priority for you. We asked our Florida members if this would fit into their schedule and about 20 said yes.

The idea would be to have a hospitality and craft improvement session plus a new product introduction to benefit both Supporting members and Active writers. We're talking with the IBEX team

about coordinating this, in addition to their usual offer of admission to seminars for members. If you have a comment on this, please drop me a email at the address below.

Our members also serve as the judging team for the IBEX Innovation Awards. If new boat building and related products are of interest and you have a technical background to review some of them, also email me with details.

Last Call for '14 Dues

The final reminder on payment of 2014 dues has been sent (you know who you are), and the cutoff date is here. Please fire in a check or visit www.bwi.org under the “Join” tab to use a credit card with PayPal. Dues keep your benefits flowing, including:

- Regular Communications & Networking
- Annual Directory & Online Listing
- Access to BWI's LinkedIn
- Free first two entries to the Writing Contest
- Easy access to boat shows with BWI's Press Card

We very much appreciate everyone's continued support.

You can reach me at Alan@wendtproductions.com.

Alan Wendt
BWI President

Young Dies in Motorcycle Accident

BWI member Claiborne Young [1951-2014] passed away on June 14 following a serious motorcycle accident. Born and raised in Burlington, NC, he was a well-known boating author, speaker, and web publisher. He created Salty Southeast Cruisers' Net (www.cruisersnet.net) for active cruisers in the coastal waters of the Southeastern U.S., from North Carolina to New Orleans. The free site tracks those cruising in the region, fuel prices, marina, anchorage and bridge directories and issues and legislation of importance. He had just planned content for the fall boating season prior to his death.

Alan Wendt, BWI President, said, "Long before the Internet, Claiborne's guides were a tremendous resource to dis-



Claiborne Young

covering Florida. As a young TV reporter, I found my way around the coastline thanks to him. It led to niche reporting in an area that mainstream reporters unfamiliar with the therapeutic powers of boating overlook. On behalf of the members of BWI, our

thoughts are with his friends and many fans."

Young authored a series of books for the cruising community from the Carolinas to Florida. His first book, the "Cruising Guide to North Carolina" was published in 1983. He also worked with UNC-TV [PBS] to produce a series of travel videos on the waters and small towns of North Carolina's coast.

A motorcycle enthusiast and animal lover, Young was a supporter of the Alamance County Humane Society and the American Humane Society. He was also a self-taught chef who was often found in the kitchen producing tasty dishes. He was preceded in death by his wife Karen Williams Young who passed away in October, 2013.

Discover Boating Adds Documentaries

Discover Boating has added new "Stories of Discovery" documentaries to the campaign. Through three different videos viewers meet Jake Owen, the Ader family, and Justin Caskey as they tell their personal story of being a boater. Each story discover-

ers how being on the water can impact someone's life in a profound way. The videos are a cornerstone of Discover Boating's 2014 content marketing efforts

and have already been viewed more than 2 million times.

"Our message is one of value," reflects Joe Lewis, chairman

of Grow Boating and owner of Mount Dora (FL) Boating Center. "We're not out to convince people boating is inexpensive. Instead we'd like to show boating may not be out of reach and most importantly that it's worth it. ... Each boater talks about what boating means to them, their family and friends, and how it's enriched their lives." A fourth story in production is about



the Vazquez family, a first generation Mexican-American family.

View the videos by going to www.discoverboating.com/storiesofdiscovery. To share the videos download at www.growboating.org/toolkit/webcontent/videos.aspx or contact Michael Perulli at mpe-rulli@nmma.org.

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.

Distributed in a PDF format, pricing is \$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 available to Supporting Members. Materials will be needed in mid-August. To reserve space or for more information, contact Greg Proteau at info@bwi.org, 847/736-4142.

Mercury's 75th; Media Looks Ahead



BWI members on hand for the Mercury media meeting included Alan Jones (from l.), Charlie Levine, Lindsey Johnson, Chris Landry, Craig Ritchie and Michael Verdon.

Mercury Marine invited media to their home base in Fond du Lac, WI June 16 to 18 to continue a celebration of their 75th anniversary year and to introduce several new outboards and a sterndrive product that will be available this fall. About 40 boating writers, including a number of BWI members, were on hand for the event that included running new product, tours of production and testing facilities, a visit to the recently opened Mercury Museum, and access to company chiefs to hear plans for competing in the challenging pleasure marine market.

John Pfeifer, recently named president of Mercury, led the charge unveiling the new MerCruiser 4.5L 250-hp. sterndrive that was designed and is totally manufactured at the headquarter facility. "We are proud to introduce the next generation of sterndrive technology with this groundbreaking new engine," he said. "This engine was purpose-built for marine use and it delivers Mercury's proven performance, durability and ease of service." The V-6

engine weighs 130 pounds less than a 5.0L V-8 small block, and is said to provide similar performance.

Mercury's president of Global Sales and Marketing, Kevin Grodzki, told writers the new 75-, 90- and 115-hp. FourStroke outboards, replacing predecessor models, had seen unprecedented research, development and engineering input spanning five years. Gaining low profiles and lower weight – 20 pounds lighter than competitive powerplants says Merc – Grodzki also described the new engines featuring a 2.1-liter, four-cylinder, eight-valve, single-overhead-cam design that delivers more torque and horsepower than competitors.

A tour encompassing several plant operations revealed the significant capital investment in facilities, manufacturing, production advancement and testing the company has made over the past several years. New production methods have been established overall, new production lines have been recently added or are in pro-

gress for new products, both outboard and sterndrive with the incorporation of MerCruiser manufacturing at Fond du Lac. Engineering and technical development staff has grown to 500 in the U.S. and offshore, new testing facilities have been added to improve product development and ultimately performance and reliability, and expanded foundry operations are adding leading edge metal molding equipment to component production, efficiency and quality.

At the Mercury Museum, writers viewed highlights of the firm's 1939 founding and development, a history of the spirited founder, Carl Kiekhaefer, transition to and continuing ownership by Brunswick Corporation, and displays of watershed products introduced over the years. Racing on water (and on land) has always been in the blood of the company, and this shines through in the images shown, reminders of products tried and true, and some short lived, like chain-saws and snowmobiles. The graphics underscore that the race continues for leadership in recreational marine propulsion, with able competitors and a goal line that advances with technology's march.

To see the complete Mercury history timeline and related products and videos, visit www.mercurymarine.com/75years.

An image of Carl Kiekhaefer (top) greets visitors to the Mercury Museum; inside, the seven-plus decades are detailed on panels (below) including this one from the '70s when the firm "went global."



New Ethanol Awareness Campaign



The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), an international trade association representing 100 small engine, utility vehicle and outdoor power equipment manufacturers and suppliers, is redoubling efforts for a national ethanol education and consumer protection campaign, called “Look Before You Pump.” NMMA and marine engine makers have signed on to promote the campaign that cautions consumers that it is harmful and illegal to use higher than 10 percent ethanol gas in any outdoor power equipment, such as marine engines, mowers, chain

saws, snow throwers, UTVs, generators and other small engine products.

The urgency of the industry’s campaign comes from research that shows high-ethanol blends of gasoline can damage or destroy small engines not designed to handle it. A recent OPEI/Harris Interactive study shows the vast majority of Americans (71 percent) are “not at all sure” if it is illegal or legal to put high level ethanol gas (i.e., anything higher than 10 percent ethanol) into engines such as those in boats and other engine products.

Most fuel sold today at gas stations contains up to 10 percent ethanol (E10). However, in the past year, more

stations are selling ethanol gasoline blends greater than 10 percent – such as 15, 30, 50 and 85 percent ethanol — often from a gasoline blender pump. And, higher ethanol blends are likely cheaper.

The ‘Look Before You Pump’ campaign will reach consumers through radio and video public service announcements (PSA), fact sheets, in-store displays, labeling and product hang-tags. A prominent, red warning hand indicating ‘OK’ for 10 percent ethanol and ‘No’ for mid-level ethanol blends (such as E15, E30, E85) is the campaign’s main graphic.

For more information, visit www.LookBeforeYouPump.com.

Top 100 Family Boat Fish Spots

A nationwide search has identified the best family-friendly fishing and boating locations, compiled by the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation. RBFF asked members of its online community to vote for their favorite parks to go boating and fishing, and nearly 200,000 votes were cast.

The parks on the list represent the best family-friendly fishing and boating areas, all within a reasonable drive from many major cities. Many of the parks offer multiple species to catch, areas

for picnics and restrooms and opportunity to cast a line from shore or a boat.



In all, 26 states have at least one park in the Top 100.

California took top honors with the number one spot, and tied with Texas having eight parks in the Top 100. Close behind were Florida, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania with six parks each.

Cities that produced the most votes included New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, however Nebraska was included with both Omaha and Lincoln making the list.

A full list of the Top 100 Family Fishing and Boating Spots can be found in the Community section of www.TakeMeFishing.org. There is also a sharable infographic available. Contact David Rodgers, [drodgers@rbff.org](mailto:d Rodgers@rbff.org).

The Top 10 Spots list includes:

1. Lake Berryessa, Pleasure Cove Resort, Napa Valley, CA
2. Bahia Honda State Park, Big Pine Key, FL
3. Skyway Fishing Pier State Park, St. Petersburg, FL
4. Everglades National Park, Homestead, FL
5. Kissimmee State Park, Lake Wales, FL
6. Galveston Island State Park, Galveston, TX
7. Lake Chabot Regional Park, Castro Valley, CA
8. Blue Springs State Park, Orange City, FL
9. Table Rock State Park, Branson, MO
10. Presque Isle State Park, Erie, PA

Supporting Member News

Beneteau Acquires Rec Boat Holdings

Bénéteau Group has acquired Rec Boat Holdings (RBH) which designs, builds and sells Four Winns, Glastron, Wellcraft and Scarab brands. After launching sales of motorboats over 39-feet in 2010, the Group is embarking on a second phase. Based in Cadillac, MI, RBH has revenues of about \$150 million and employs 475 people. It has a network of over 200 dealers across North America. The seller, Platinum Equity, acquired the portfolio of boat brands and related assets in 2010 from Genmar Holdings, Inc. Platinum retains ownership of Flippin, AR-based Fishing Boat Holdings, maker of the Ranger, Triton and Stratos boat brands. Contact Maryline O'Shea, m.oshea@beneteau.com.

Products Earn NMEA 2000® Certification

Designating that products will work together as advertised, 34 products produced by ten marine electronics manufacturers recently received NMEA 2000® certification. The open industry network standard permits electrical and electronic devices to communicate with each other. To be certified, a product must have at least one isolated interface that communicates using the hardware and higher-level protocols established in the 2000 Standard for Serial Data Networking of Marine Electronic Devices. There are currently 587 certified prod-

ucts. Visit www.nmea.org/content/nmea_standards/certified_produ.asp for a complete list.

Volvo Diesels Power New Rescue Craft

The U.S. Coast Guard has approved Willard Marine's Sea Force® 670 SOLAS rescue boat with Volvo Penta diesel power. Approval signifies that the boat meets the standards established by the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) treaty. It's powered by a Volvo Penta 220-hp. D3 en-



gine, paired with a Hamilton water jet drive. The D3 is a five-cylinder, four-stroke diesel-injected turbocharged, aftercooled marine diesel engine. It meets IMO Tier 2 NOx limits and U.S. EPA Tier 3 emission requirements. Contact Lindsay Shrewsberry, lindsay.shrewsberry@volvo.com.

Interlux Goes Digital With Paint App

The Interlux® Boat Paint Guide has gone digital with the launch of a free app for Apple® IOS and Android smartphones and tablets, designed to make it easy to access product information and select the correct paint system. The new App features: A Quick Reference Guide for detailed product information, health & safety



information, store locator to find a dealer by address or your location, and a paint calculator to estimate how much paint will be needed for specific boats. Links to downloads are on the home page at www.yachtpaint.com/usa.

Xantrex Powers Restored Whale Ship

When the 172-year old tall ship Charles W. Morgan set out on its historic 38th voyage in mid-June, it carried safety enhancements that were unheard of at the time of its construction - including a pair of Xantrex Freedom SW 24V - 3000W/75A inverter/chargers that deliver 6,000 watts of continuous electrical power. Built in 1841, the ship is the last of an American whaling fleet that once numbered more than 2,700 vessels. With the completion of a five-year, multi-million dollar restoration, the ship has been restored to as-new condition.

This included the inverter/chargers which will provide a safe, reliable source of electric power needed to run weather radios and navigational equipment. Contact Mitul Chandrani, mitul.chandrani@schneider-electric.com.



The Charles W. Morgan.
Photo, Mystic Seaport.

Calendar & Events

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Star brite On Board for "Tackle X" Event

Star brite will be a participant during "Tackle X" to showcase products and services from the sportfishing industry, taking place July 15 at Lake X, Mercury Marine's former secret research and development facility. The venue allows writers to see products in a real-world setting the day before ICAST (International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades) opens at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL. Shuttle busses will run between the Convention Center and Lake. Lunch will be provided. For more information, contact Rich Adair at the Kenneth Kirchman Foundation, rich@kirchmanfoundation.org, 407/709-1745.

Nominations Sought For Hall of Fame Award

To nominate an individual for the 2014 NMMA Hall of Fame Award, send a request for a formal entry form to Bryan Welsh, bwelsh@nmma.org. Deadline for submission is August 1. The Award will be presented at the IBEX event on September 30 in Tampa, FL. The NMMA Hall of Fame recognizes individuals who

have, or continue to generate, substantial and lasting contributions toward the advancement of the marine industry. It honors individuals whose names and deeds are synonymous with the pursuit of quality, innovation, and perfection within their respective spheres of expertise.

Fish Advisory Group Seeks New Members

Nominations are being sought for appointment by the Secretary of Commerce

on the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee beginning in the fall of 2014. MAFAC is the only Federal advisory committee to advise on matters concerning living marine resources. Nominees should possess demonstrable expertise in a field related to the management of living marine resources and be able to fulfill the time commitments required for two annual meetings and subcommittee work. Individuals serve for three years. Nominations must be postmarked by July 7. Contact Heidi Lovett, 301/427-8004, heidi.lovett@noaa.gov.

Entries Due Aug. 29 for IBEX Innovations

IBEX (International Boatbuilders Exhibition & Conference), September 30- October 2 in Tampa, FL, will recognize and award new marine industry products with IBEX Innovation Awards, judged by members of BWI. Only IBEX exhibitors are eligible and must submit their online entry form by August 29. To access the online entry form, go to www.ibexshow.com/innovation-awards-exhib.php. Contact Rachel Timko at rtimko@nmma.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.