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The Power of Recovery, Plus One

If you didn't make the Miami Boat Show you missed one of the best events in the last ten years. The industry is back – and like the overall U.S. economy – some segments still are lagging – yet overall sales, floor traffic, even the number of press parties were the strongest in a decade.

Hydra Sports, one of many brands that died in the recession and changed hands twice, showed what a transfusion of talent and energy can bring. Their show stopping 53' Center Console, Senors with quad outboards and a price tag north of a million, resulted in more than ten contracts.

Volvo played the role of industry consolidator with their Innovation Award winning Forward Drive, somehow managing to get four OEM's to keep quiet for two years while each developed a boat to tap into the super-hot wakesurfing movement.

Yamaha's Jet Boat line showed great progress in their niche with a blend of technology both above and below the waterline. Even the pontoon market had something new as this stalwart business silo capitalizes on buyers' penchant for a luxury



“Drones 101” by Miami Aerial at BWI's Annual Meeting (see www.miamiaerial.com).

living room experience on the water.

And Mercury Marine had the savviest of social networkers dreaming of ways to emulate its holiday “Carol of the Bells” YouTube production that grabbed a Marine Marketers Neptune Award (visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=y-Tx5dOfjHw).

BWI's annual writing contest awards breakfast recognized tremendous talent across a broad spectrum of topics. Congratulations to our winning writers and huge thank-yous to the judges and sponsors. Dozens of us volunteer an evening or weekend to read a category -- an enriching experience. From the art of a strong lead, to well-crafted story telling you are exposed to talent from a variety of publications.

We are always in need of volunteers. As a peer judged event, we always need volunteers. So please read next year. And with a friendly, pointed jab – that includes a few of our perennial winners.

Volunteering came up in our BWI board meeting as well. With membership numbers finally stabilizing as a result of industry recovery, we are on the uptick with

new members. Additions of the photography category in our contest, the hands-on seminar on drones, and expansion of a judge for the Innovation Awards are helping re-energize our organization.

Our goal this year is to add one new member. Let me restate that. As a member, your goal is to sponsor one new member. Each one of you. Invite that new kid down the hall, the online blogger who has carved out a few freelance bucks for doing what they love, or the client who came to you for PR and marketing help and could be a supporting member of BWI. But only one!

You can reach me at Alan@wendtproductions.com.

Alan Wendt
BWI President

New Director Joins BWI Board

BWI members have elected two directors and its Board has re-elected three officers. Joining the Board as a new director is Michael Vatalaro, who has spent the past 10 years with BoatU.S. Magazine, the last five in the role of Executive Editor. He assigns and edits much of the Practical Boater section, the annual Trailing Guide, and the fishing-related content in all titles Prior to joining BoatU.S., Vatalaro was a science writer and worked briefly for a weekly health program on PBS and a documentary maker.

Re-elected as a director (which carries a three-year term) was Lenny Rudow, a writer and editor in the marine field for over two decades, and author of six books. In the election for directors, 91

members voted out of 300 (Actives & Associates) or 30% (requires 25% to be validated).

Officers elected to one-year terms are freelance writer Alan Wendt, president; Lenny Rudow as 1st Vice President; and editor of *Lakeland Boating* magazine Lindsey Johnson, 2nd vice president.

Continuing as Directors are: immediate past president John Wooldridge, editor-at-large of *Yachting*; Zuzana Prochazka, editor of *Talk of the Dock* and freelance writer for a number of boating magazines and online venues; Michael Sciulla, a *Soundings Trade Only* columnist and communications strategist; Alan Jones, a full-time writer and editor for



Vatalaro



Retiring Director Heather Steinberger (r.) receives BWI Service Award from Greg Proteau.

Boating World and *Sea Magazines*; and Roger McAfee, a freelance writer for several boating magazines, seminar presenter at boat shows and author of two marine books.

Writing Contest Award Presentations



Writing Contest Award recipients and sponsors on hand in Miami. Above l, l to r: Chris Caswell, KVH's Rick Driscoll, Peter Swanson and Bill Sisson. Above r: Martin Flory's Kelly Flory and Ann Dermody. Left: Brett Bayne with Freedom Boat Club's John Giglio. Right Alan Wendt and Mary South.

See all contest results at www.bwi.org/news/bwi/award-best-boating-writing-of-past-year/.



Contest Awards, continued

More Award recipients and sponsors. Right, from l.: Carol Cronin, Tasha Hacker, Alan Wendt and John Kretschmer. 1st row below: Kevin Koenig with ZF's Martin Meissner; BoatUS's Scott Croft and Ben Ellison; Suzuki's John Woolson with Bill Sisson. 2nd row: John Stefancik and Sea Tow's Cindy McCaffery; Marilyn Mower with Volvo's Ron Huibers and Lenny Rudow; Carol Cronin and Discover Boating's Laura Dunn. Third row: Chris Caswell with Home Port Marine's David Pilvelait and Michael Sciulla; Xantrex's Mitul Chandrani with Shawn Bean and Peter Nielsen.

Photos: Ron Ballanti

See all contest results at www.bwi.org/news/bwi/award-best-boating-writing-of-past-year/.



NMEA Grows Tech Info for Users



Reedenauer speaking at BWI Miami meeting

National Marine Electronics Association President and Executive Director Mark Reedenauer offered an update of his group's plans during the BWI annual meeting with breakfast sponsored by NMEA. "We are striving to improve boaters' experience. They have limited time on the water and don't want problems with their marine electronics. To combat that we have an extensive network of training for installers and technicians aimed at ensuring quality and fully functional electronics installations.

"If technical issues arise, NMEA wants to serve as an extension of manufacturers' tech support, specifically anything related to our standards

-- NMEA 0183 and NMEA 2000. We have technical expertise to assist and will roll out new programs in 2015 to address problems that occur.

"In support of our manufacturer members, in 2014 we trained more than 150 of their employees -- Furuno, Garmin, Raymarine, Navico, Humminbird, to name a few. All now have NMEA-trained employees resulting in more knowledgeable conversations with boaters on a tech support call or at shows.

"We know that customers will increasingly buy marine electronics online and install the equipment themselves. We want end users to have tools and resources to prop-

erly install them. We will be producing several Do-it-Yourself Guides for them. The DIY Guide to Quality VHF Installations is the first of several for the end user.

"Another excellent resource is the *Marine Electronics Journal's* Tips Technology & Talk blog site -- a place for boaters and writers to gain marine electronics knowledge from industry experts.

"NMEA wants to hear comments or ideas from writers that will make the boating experience better for everyone around the globe." For a copy of the VHF Installation Guide contact Reedenauer, mreedenaue@nmea.org.

Dates Set for Moving Miami Show

Details of the planned relocation for the Miami International Boat Show are continuing to come together, including dates set for President's Day weekend February 11 to 15, 2016. The new location is the Miami Marine Stadium Park and Basin. Located on Virginia Key, just across from downtown Miami, the Park and Basin are well known by the Florida boating community.

The City of Miami will be investing \$16 million to rejuvenate the Park and Basin. NMMA will build cus-

tomized docks and erect state-of-the-art tents to accommodate exhibitors. The area of water adjoining the venue, which is the size of the Washington Mall, can accommodate at least 700 slips and will also be able to house large boats in a deep water basin. On land, large, cutting-edge tent structures will be both air conditioned and open-air and will span Marine Stadium Park. Other elements of the new site include more plentiful parking, the availability of water taxis from ports and hotels from throughout Miami that will be taking attendees to and from the show, and the ability for private boats to dock at the show and have access to launch services.

Attending the show will be facilitated, says NMMA, by

having numerous hotels nearby, both downtown and in Key Biscayne. "Next year will bring an entirely new and exciting Miami International Boat Show and I encourage you to plan now for how you want to use the space to sell your boats and marine products," noted NMMA President Thom Dammrich during his address at the annual Industry Breakfast during the Miami Show. He adds that NMMA will still coordinate meeting spaces for groups wishing to meet in Miami and that it is likely that most formal meetings will take place in hotels in downtown Miami.

For developing information visit www.miamiboatshow.com.



Innovation Awards Made in Miami

NMMA presented Miami Boat Show Innovation Awards to 17 products recognized as technological advancements by a BWI judging team. This year's program featured a record number of entries with 97 products, a 68 percent increase in entries compared to last year.

The recipients are:

- Alternate Drive Technology (pods, stern drives): Volvo Penta, Forward Drive



Volvo's Forward Drive

- Deck Equipment & Hardware: Taco Metals, Rub Rail Mounted LED Light
- Docking & Fendering Equipment: StormFender LLC, StormFender
- Mechanical & Electrical Systems: Yamaha Watercraft,



Yamaha Connex Helm

- Connex Helm Control
- Consumer Safety Equipment: Simrad-Navico, Forward Scan

- Watersport Equipment: LilliPad Diving Board
- Inboard Engines: Indmar Products, Roush Charged Raptor



Indmar Roush Charged Raptor

- Outboard Engines: BRP U.S. Inc., Evinrude E-TEC G2
- Consumer Electronics, Apps & Software: Navionics, Inc, SonarCharts and SonarCharts Live
- Center Console & Walk-around Fishing Boats: Hydra-Sport, 53' Suenos
- Cuddy Cabin and Bowrider Boats: Rec Boat Holdings/ Four Winns, Horizon 440 Bow Cruiser
- Deck Boats: Boston Whaler, 320 Vantage
- Jet Boats: Chaparral Boats, Aerial Surf Platform
- Personal Watercraft (PWCs): Yamaha Watercraft, Yamaha RiDE System
- Pontoon Boats: Apex Marine, Inc., Angler Quest
- Tow Boats: MasterCraft Boat Company, X23
- Environmental Award: Wake Worx, LLC, Mussel Mast'R Aquatic Invasive Species Filter System

Innovation Awards judges are BWI members who perform product testing and have specific expertise in marine products and equipment. The committee in Miami included: freelance writer Zuzana Prochazka, chairperson; Nigel Calder, Technical

Editor with *Professional Boat-Builder*; Alan Jones, Executive Editor of *Boating World* magazine; Liz Pasch, Editorial Director of *Southern Boating*; Lenny Rudow, Senior Editor for Boats.com and Yacht-world.com; David Schmidt, Electronics Editor at *Yachting* magazine; Ed Sherman, Education Director of American Boat & Yacht Council and freelancer; and Alan Wendt, President of BWI and contributor to *Lakeland Boating*.

Contact Rachel Timko, rtimko@nmma.org.

BoatUS Founder Richard Schwartz Has Died

BoatUS Chairman and Founder Richard Schwartz, 85, who created the advocacy and services organization for the nation's recreational boat owners, passed away February 11 after a short illness. He retired after 47 years two years ago but until his passing remained Chairman.

A Princeton and Yale Law School graduate and anti-trust attorney, Schwartz discovered early in his career that no one represented boaters and he became a boater advocate. His efforts at shaping national boating policy helped secure passage of the Recreational Boating Safety and Facilities Improvement Act of 1979 – known as the Biaggi Bill – which earmarked taxes and fees paid by boaters to support boating programs. He was a vocal opponent to user fees and the unpopular luxury tax (1992) and the diesel fuel tax (1997), both of which were repealed. In 1984, Schwartz was a leader in the passage of the federal Wallop/Breaux Trust Fund Amendment, which now returns over \$600 million annually to federal and state boating and fishing programs.

Taking advantage of America's post-war boom in recreational boating, Schwartz was an early pioneer in discount marine retailing – eventually opening a chain of 62 BoatUS retail stores. The BoatUS Marine Insurance program, started in 1967, offered boat policies in clear language versus unintelligible commercial ship language.

Schwartz helped found and then served on the National Safe Boating Council and has received a wide range of awards, including those from the Council, Boating Law Administrators, the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Power Squadron, Sea Scouts and NMMA.

Contact Scott Croft, SCroft@BoatUS.com.



Calendar & Events

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Palm Beach Show Runs March 26 to 29

The 2015 Palm Beach International Boat Show is set to take place in downtown West Palm Beach from March 26 to March 29. Additions to this year's event are The Blue Wild featuring scuba, freediving, lobstering and The AquaZone with live paddleboard, kayak and stand-up-paddleboard yoga demonstrations. The show is owned by the Marine Industries Association of Palm Beach County and produced by Show Management. Visit www.ShowManagement.com.

PFD Design Contest Has \$10,000 Prize

The BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety is teaming up with the Personal Flotation Device Manufacturers Association and NMMA to find the best new life jacket ideas based on four criteria: wearability, reliability, cost and innovation. On the line is a first place prize of \$10,000 for the best new design submitted for the 2015 Innovations in Life Jacket Design Competition. Boaters, arm chair inventors, design, engineering or high school students have until the



Future PFD?

April 15 deadline to submit their design to BoatUS.org/design. For details, see the video at http://youtu.be/wSfdANt_IJU.

Ladies Fish University

"Ladies, Let's Go Fishing!"® will host the South Florida Fishing University April 17-19, 2015 at the I.T. Parker Community Center, Dania Beach. Women, teens and male guests can learn, then practice fishing at several hands-on skill stations, plus have an option to charter fish on Sunday. Registration includes networking reception and fundraisers, classes, hands on practice and more. Guided fishing on Sunday is additional. New for 2015 is the Ladies Choice option to bring a male guest or invite their teens. Details at www.ladiesletsgofishing.com.

Reminder: Soundings Subscription Offered

BWI has negotiated a "Corporate Subscription" to *Trade Only Today* which allows dues paying members access to the news site for free - a \$29 annual value.

Click the link or paste into a browser (www.tradeonlytoday.com/account/join/?passcode=cWVS3TkalhM62Bn), log-in and Join the Corporate subscription invitation now available as a BWI member benefit. (If you are not currently registered, do so and when prompted, paste "cWVS3TkalhM62Bn" in the passcode box to join.)

If you have difficulty, send an email to webmaster@tradeonlytoday.com.



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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.