

Inside this issue:

Capt. Joe Passes On 2

Joysticks Open Access to Disabled 3

Safe Boating Week

Active Member News 4

Supporting Member News 5

Calendar & Events 6

What Safety Can Look Like

He was easily in his 70's and my guess is she wasn't far behind. Tied up at Tarpon Point Marina in Cape Coral, they were just emerging from the cabin below, getting ready to start the process for casting off. What caught my eye was not their age, but that both were taking a moment to adjust each other's inflatable PFDs.

Love. They had come this far on life's journey and weren't about to chance losing the other, acknowledging that their sea legs weren't what they used to be.

National Safe Boating Week is May 16-22, and it seems like a good time to ask how many of our members wear PFDs when doing a boat test? I know it's one more thing to pack, and between cameras, speed guns, and fuel flow gadgets you probably don't have room.

We jump on and off so many boats during the year, falling overboard is something that only happens on YouTube, right? I admit to leaving the PFD at home far too often. My wife reminds me that my Superman cape is a bit faded and with my gut, I wouldn't look good in a blue spandex suit anyway. But like the older couple on the boat,



Practicing with flares. Photo: BoatUS

she's not ready to cash in my life insurance.

The National Safe Boating Council provides editorial resources, graphics, and video free of charge at www.safeboatingcampaign.com (there's a bit more detail inside on page 3). Whether you take the Wave Train with BWI member Charles Doane around the world, or simply kayak in waist deep streams, learning about the right PFD and current regulations about use, can be found on their site.

As we pause in this issue to remember Sea Tow founder Captain Joe Frohnhoefer, Jr., life jackets were always part of his marketing message. His franchisees all wore PFDs in publicity photos and they practice what they preach on

the water. One of Captain Joe's legacies is the Sea Tow Foundation. This year they are relaunching a nationwide program to collect new and "gently used" PFDs that can be repurposed for boaters in need to borrow through their successful Life Jacket Loaner Station program (visit www.boating-safety.com).

We lost another safety advocate earlier this year, Richard Schwartz, whose efforts with the BoatUS

Foundation (www.boatus.org/about/our-mission.asp) delivered important warnings about boating while impaired, electric shock drowning, carbon monoxide dangers, as well as PFD use; much of this was delivered through free online safety courses.

Both of these boating safety pioneers, and the organizations that remain their legacies, merit our continued support, distribution of their information and attention to their resources.

The story about safe boating should never get old, just the participants.

You can reach me at Alan@wendtproductions.com.

Alan Wendt
BWI President

Capt. Joe Heads Out to Final Rest

Captain Joseph Frohnhoefer, Jr., founder and CEO of Sea Tow Services International, died peacefully at the age of 71

on March 24, at his home in Southold, N.Y., after a brief battle with cancer. His wife of more than 46 years, Georgia, was by his side. The longtime and loyal supporter of BWI and friend of many of its members, remained at the helm of Sea Tow, the international on-water assistance company founded in 1983, until the end.

A visionary entrepreneur and a life-

long first responder who made saving lives and helping others his priority, Capt. Joe leaves a lasting impact on the marine industry. In addition to running Sea Tow with the help of his

wife, daughter, Kristen Frohnhoefer, and son, Capt. Joseph Frohnhoefer III, Capt. Joe was a volunteer EMT in his local community on Long Island's North Fork. He served two terms on the U.S. Towing Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC), formed to advise U.S. Secretary of Transportation on waterway navigation and towing safety. Capt. Joe also cofounded C-PORT

(Conference of Professional Operators for Response Towing), the national association for the marine assistance industry, in 1986, and served on

its Board of Directors until his death.

Writing in the May issue of *Soundings Trade Only*, Richard Armstrong said, "Frohnhoefer established a whole new industry [in the early 1980s] — professional non-emergency marine assistance — and it has led to more than 100 franchise locations in the United States and overseas with another 500 yellow Sea Tow boats standing by to assist, the employment of thousands of industry professionals over the years and major improvements in boating safety."

Adds Michael Sciulla, who served as vice president of government and public affairs for BoatUS at the time, "Joe persisted in his pursuit and once the federal government officially curbed the Coast Guard and its auxiliary, his business began to take off. It showed such promise that BoatUS later decided to get into the business itself."

Editors and publicists Gary and Louisa Beckett mention a moment of kindness commonly extended to those Capt. Joe worked with. "We visited him and Georgia by boat at their house. He handed us keys to his truck and, knowing how we love wine, told us about local wine tastings going on. We capped off the day by dinner with him and Georgia with 3-pound lobsters."

Also on the *Soundings* website, Wanda Kenton Smith offered, "Joe was bigger than life and leaves a legacy in his wake that will continue to positively impact the lives of boaters throughout the na-

tion. I will truly miss his gregarious personality and engaging smile that always made him a pleasure to encounter at boating events and shows."

Throughout his career Capt. Joe strived, both personally and professionally, to make the water a safer and more enjoyable place for boaters. In 2007, the company founded the nonprofit Sea Tow Foundation that promotes boating safety and life jacket use. Since the start it has distributed more than 29,000 free loaner life jackets to boaters who need them. More recently, he worked with the Foundation to develop the Designated Skipper Campaign, aimed at alerting of the dangers of boating while impaired.

Capt. Joe received many awards during his career for his business acumen and efforts on behalf of the recreational boater. Among them were The 2002 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award; 2004 "Supplier of the Year" by the Marine Retailers Association of the Americas; 2012 Optimum Lightpath Innovator of the Year Award for the high-tech communications solutions at Sea Tow headquarters; and 2014 NMMA Charles. F. Chapman Award, recognizing lifelong contributions to the recreational boating industry and public.

Donations in honor of Capt. Joe can be made to the Southold Fire Department or the Sea Tow Foundation (P.O. Box 1469 or Box 1325, respectively, Southold, NY 11971).



Above, Capt. Joe and Georgia at 2014 presentation of Chapman Award; Below, presenting Lenny Rudow a BWI Writing Award.



Joysticks Open Boating to Disabled

Kerry Gruson and her friend John Muir have been attending BWI meetings in Miami for a number of years and met a number of members along the way. During this year's show, they connected with Mercury Marine's public relations director Lee Gordon who arranged for a test drive on a Mako 284, powered by twin Mercury 350 h.p. Verado outboard engines with Joystick Piloting.

Gruson has limited use of her arms and legs, but with assistance was able to wrap her hand around the joystick and feel a sense of controlling the boat. "It was so much fun being able to control the joystick," explained Gruson with help from Muir. "There is so much power and so much force."

"It's an indescribably good feeling," said Muir. "It gives Kerry the freedom to take family and friends on the water. It opens up the world to

her." See a brief video of the outing here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ih8glj_FOss.

A veteran journalist who spent time with the *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Chicago Sun-Times* and *Miami News*, among others, Gruson was on her way to cover the Vietnam War in 1974 when she was attacked and choked nearly to death. The incident left her permanently disabled at just 26 years old. But over the past four decades, her love for boating has grown, and she has constantly found a way to get out on the water.

Through the years, Gruson has participated in events with Active Disabled Americans, Winterfest Boat Parade and the Boating & Beach Bash for People with Disabilities. She is a board member for Shake-A-Leg Miami which has, for 25 years, helped get people of all abilities out on the water. She has also been



Kerry Gruson at the helm of the joystick-equipped Mako with a "hands-off" John Muir behind her.

involved with ThumbsUp International which pairs able-bodied and adaptive athletes to compete in 5Ks, open water swims and triathlons.

A YouTube documentary on Gruson's life in 2011 captures her incredible spirit and love for the water. Unfortunately, her condition has worsened since the story was filmed, but she is able to fully communicate via email. Contact her at kerrygruson@gmail.com.

Safe Boat Week Urges Lifevest Use

Boating safety advocates across the U.S. and Canada are teaming up to promote safe and responsible boating, including consistent life jacket wear every time boaters are on the water, during National Safe Boating Week, May 16 to 22. NSBW launches the yearlong Safe Boating Campaign to promote consistent life jacket wear by recreational boaters through the national theme, "Wear It!"

U.S. Coast Guard statistics show that drowning was the



reported cause of death in three-fourths of recreational boating fatalities in 2013, and that 84 percent of those who drowned were not wearing life jackets.

National Recreational Boating Statistics show

- Fatalities: 560
- Drownings: 398
- Serious Injuries: 2,620
- Boating Accidents: 4,062

- Property Damage: \$39,175,826

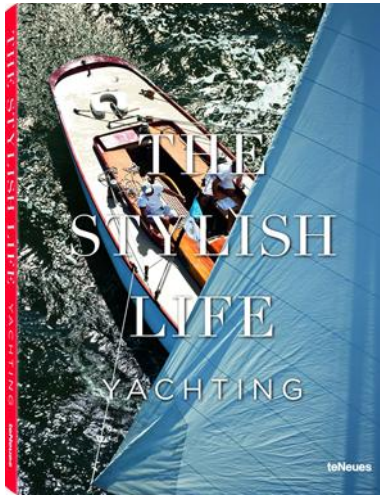
Throughout the campaign, Wear It! reminds of life jacket wear, boating sober, knowing navigational rules and having a proper lookout. Partners will host local events, teach classes, offer on-water training, distribute educational materials, and offer vessel safety checks.

To access the campaign press kit, go to www.safeboatingcampaign.com. Contact Yalda Moslehian, ymoslehian@safeboatingcouncil.org.

Active & Associate Member News

Kavin Publishes 2nd Yachting Book

BWI Past President Kim Kavin has published "The Stylish Life: Yachting," part of a series of luxury coffee-table books from TeNeues. Kavin was responsible for the words that are featured alongside historical and modern photographs from around the world. It is her second boating book. Her first was "Dream Cruises: The Insider's Guide to Private Yacht Charter Vacations." Offered on Amazon, "Stylish Life" portrays the crowned heads of Europe and



business moguls to Hollywood screen legends and socialites as they display their nautical prowess. Locales such as Monte Carlo, Mykonos, and St. Barths provide backdrops to the yachting lifestyle where "everyone is rich and attractive -- and it's always the height of summer." Contact Kavin at kim-kavin@comcast.net,

Sherman Moves Up To ABYC VP, Ed Chief

The American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC) has promoted Ed Sherman to the position of vice president and educational director. Previously director of educational programming, he was responsible for the development and updating of certification and training programs and the organization's lead instructor. "Ed has been performing



Ed Sherman

these services for ABYC for quite some time," said John Adey, ABYC president. "He's been the face of, and driving force behind, our educational endeavors and products for the past 15 years." Sherman is the author of five books on marine power and electrical systems and co-authored ABYC's textbook, Fundamentals of Marine Service Technology. He is a BWI Writing Contest award-winning writer for several magazines and runs www.edsoattips.com. Contact media@abycinc.org.

Martin Flory Signs Two New Clients

Martin Flory Group has signed two new clients. The PR company will promote Stuart, FL-based Ocean Master, a builder of semi-custom offshore center console sportfishing boats and yacht tenders from 27' to 33', in the US and Canada. To expand its North American presence,

Vesconite has hired Martin Flory to promote the South Africa-based company's products within a wide range of industries. Vesconite manufactures advanced polymers for a wide variety of bushing, bearing and plate applications. Contact info@martinflory.com.

Ladies Learn Skills at Fishing University

Participants came from as far away as Alexandria, VA to learn fishing skills at Betty Bauman's "Ladies, Let's Go Fishing!" South Florida University April 17-19 in Dania Beach, FL. Known as the "No-Yelling School of Fishing," the event offered a networking party on Friday, classes and hands-on skills Saturday and optional charter fishing on Sunday. Featured on national network television and more, the series is supported by, among others, NMMA, Discover Boating, RBFF, Mercury Marine and Freedom Boat Club. Upcoming LLGF events are May 29-31, Treasure Coast; Sept. 11-13, Bimini, Bahamas; and Nov. 13-15, Florida Keys. Contact info@ladiesletsstofishing.com.

Fishing Ladies and guide show off their catch.



Supporting Member News

GPS Store Offers VHF Install Guide

The GPS Store is teaming up with the National Marine Electronics Association to provide boaters who purchase VHF radios information they need to ensure proper

DIY installation and enjoyable experiences on the water. The company sells a range of VHF radio makes/models to customers across the country through its website, catalog and Ocean Isle Beach, NC showroom. Now, every

VHF radio sold will include a copy of NMEA's newly published "DIY Guide to Quality VHF Installations." The booklet covers a range of topics including antenna cables, connectors, mounts and placement, digital selective calling, power requirements, and VHF performance verification. Contact Ron Ballanti, strikezne@earthlink.net.

KVH Leading In VSAT Communication

The satellite communication mini-VSAT Broadband service of KVH Industries has been cited in a published report as the market share leader. "The COMSYS Maritime VSAT Report, 4th Edition" estimates that KVH's customers account for 17.9% of the vessels using maritime VSAT service. KVH launched the service in 2007 and designed its TracPhone V-IP antenna systems to be 85% smaller than competing products, reducing the installation

time and cost for maritime customers. KVH is also collaborating with content providers such as Jeppesen to deliver electronic charts and high-resolution weather data. Contact Jill Connors, jconnors@kvh.com/

Cruzin Reports IQ Record Growth

Cruzin, the boater-to-boater marketplace, has reported record growth for the first quarter of 2015 with new boat listings up 785% and customer inquiries running 967% over Q1 2014. Jaclyn Baumgarten, founder and CEO, in three years has grown the web-based business, www.cruzin.com, from concept to what is described as a successful, funded company in the highly-competitive peer-to-peer (P2P) boat-sharing market.

The service connects owners and renters in a safe, secure and insured transaction. Cruzin has over 1,500 listings worldwide, for both captained and bareboat vessels. Each transaction features background checks, up to \$3M insurance coverage, on-water towing and assistance, and owner and renter protection. Contact info@cruzin.com.

Seakeeper Steadies Wounded Warriors

When charter yacht captain Andrew Grego was introduced to injured military veterans by one of his clients who was battling cancer and experienced the restorative nature of the sea, he decided to start Blue Water Warri-



ors. He asked for help from the marine industry to build a stable boat that could accommodate injured vets. The resulting "Warrior," a custom 37.5' off-center console sportfishing boat, accommodates wheelchairs, a specially-adapted fish fighting chair plus features designed to minimize limitations. Also installed is a Seakeeper gyro to reduce resonant roll by up to 90%. Blue Water's goal is to have six vessels near military hospitals on the eastern seaboard. Its website is www.bluewaterwarriors.org and a video is at www.bit.ly/1F5SKGd. Contact news@martinflory.com.

Overview of Blue Water Warrior off-center shows accessibility.

Westlawn Tech Finds New Home, Leader

After 12 years of stewardship of the Westlawn Institute of Marine Technology, the American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC) has turned operation over to a group of private investors. Leading the group, David Smyth is now Westlawn's director, president, and vice chancellor. "In the coming months, we will transition Westlawn from a traditional correspondence school to a state-of-the-art online learning system," said Smyth. Westlawn trains students in the profession of yacht and small-craft design. Its website is www.westlawn.edu.

Calendar & Events

BWI OFFICERS

President

Alan Wendt ('15)

awendt@wendtproductions.com

1st Vice President

Lenny Rudow ('17)

ultangler@aol.com

2nd Vice President

Lindsey Johnson ('16)

ljohnson@lakelandboating.com

BWI DIRECTORS

Michael Sciuila ('15)

msciulla@gmail.com

Alan Jones ('16)

boatscribe@comcast.net

Roger McAfee ('15)

skeenaboss@telus.net

Michael Vatalaro ('17)

MVatalaro@boatus.com

Zuzana Prochazka ('16)

totemgroup@msn.com

BWI Past President

John Wooldridge

jwooldr715@gmail.com

Executive Director

Greg Proteau

info@bwi.org

National Marina Day Set For June 13

On June 13, the Association of Marina Industries, which produces National Marina Day (NMD), asks marinas to open their doors and kick off boating season by enticing people to learn about the boating industry through activities and entertainment. National Marina Day events provide opportunities to get newcomers interested in boating, motivate lapsed boaters to reconsider their decision to leave boating



and re-energize existing boaters. Visit www.nationalmarinaday.org for a resource guide with templates for promotions, invitations, activity ideas and much more. Contact Wendy Larimer, wlarimer@marinaassociation.org.

Radio Tech Group Meets May 3 to 8

The Radio Technical Commission for Maritime Service's Annual Assembly Meeting and

Conference will be held May 3 to 8 at the Loews Annapolis Hotel in Annapolis, MD. The conference, open to members and non-members, is structured to provide attendees with an overall update on the changing world of maritime radiocommunications and radionavigation. Technical sessions will be held Monday through Wednesday, and a number of committee meetings and workshops will be held throughout the week. Issues involve regional and international maritime radionavigation and radiocommunication policy, regulatory changes, and technical standards development.

More information is posted at www.rtc.org/annual-meeting.php. Contact Bob Markle, rmarkle@rtc.org.

IBEX Recognized As 'Fastest 50' Grower

Trade Show Executive Magazine has named the International BoatBuilders' Exhibition & Conference (IBEX) to the Fastest 50 Class of 2014. IBEX received recognition in two categories: growth in the number of exhibitors and



growth in attendance. Plans are fully underway for the 2015 event, taking place at the Louisville Convention Center in Kentucky, September 15-17, 2015. The 2014 show attracted 6,900 attendees, a 47 percent increase compared to 2013, and the 558 exhibiting companies represented a 15 percent increase in exhibitor participation compared to the 2013 show. Visit www.IBEXShow.com for details.

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.

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.

