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Wrapup from the (near) past prez

Admittedly, accepting the honor of being BWI President two years ago seemed like a stretch. There are far more accomplished writers who are members, and certainly many more with years of experience that I'll never possess. My resume shows evidence of having crossed over to the "dark side" several times in the last 40 years. To my relief, I've heard from many of you who have your own "Millennium Falcon" to take you for financial survival to distant planets.

The past two years saw a tremendous recovery of our beloved boat business. Many of us have adjusted to the realities of being full time freelancers – I'll use the phrase – entrepreneurs. In addition to learning the art of digital photography, we've become travel agents and experts of Cheap Hotels.com. Add video editors, search engine technicians, and manipulators of key words to our resume, necessary skills to keep our "craft" aligned with publisher's goals.

Aside from not being able to call a particular boat a "POS" or call out an accessory as "who needs it?", editors pretty much have left us practice our profession with little interference. And as a Jack Nicholson fan, maybe that's As Good As it Gets.



When you hear about Florida from people who've lived here, you're getting a perspective that a newcomer just can't deliver. First News brings you the day's top stories, as well as the people and places that make Florida unique. No other newscast covers Florida like First News. The difference is people. Kathy Fountain, Leslie Spencer and Alan Wendt – they're part of Florida, part of the First News family. Make them a part of your family – weekdays at 5 PM.



TV sure looked like part of the "dark side" in the '70's!

Like others before me, I accepted this position because I felt a need to give back, just as my mentors did 40 years ago. The BWI directors all serve because we feel a need to make a difference, to offer leadership, and to recognize and encourage excellence in writing and photography in a business that offers so much pleasure, mental diversion, and challenge.

I didn't accomplish my entire list of goals. Membership replenishment will most likely always require attention. We did add some fresh faces to the BWI board, some very talented ones at that.

With the dedicated commitment of past president Zuzana Prochazka, our selection process of judges for the NMMA and IBEX Innovation Awards is exemplary. Together we negotiated for an 8th writer to serve as a judge, with expenses paid by the show. The industry recognizes our contributions. Entries have skyrocketed from 38 to nearly 100 per show. Best of all we virtually eliminated the need for short lists - every entrant gets to be seen by the judges, thanks to a finely organized format that is respectful of the judges' time without having to chase down exhibitors.

Alan Jones' idea of speed dating turned into the very successful Pitch the Press at IBEX and returns this October in Tampa for a third year.

A huge thanks to the entire board who give so generously of their time. Lindsey Johnson who chairs the writing contest, Mike Sciulla who comes up with tremendous speakers and topics, Alan, Roger, Lenny and

Continues next page

Writing Contest Has 300+ Entries

Fifteen of 17 categories in the annual Writing Contest were valid (requiring at least 10 en-

tries) this year, with the Technical Writing category gaining most entries followed by Travel, Seamanship and Lifestyles. Overall final count was 322 entries by 127 entrants, both down from 349 and 134, respectively, last year.

The two invalid categories were Boating Photography and Ethics & Environment. Both will be examined to determine how to attract more entries or if they should be replaced with new categories.

First- to third-place scorers will receive cash awards of \$500, \$300 and \$200, respectively, February 12 during the Annual Meeting in Miami. Certificates of Merit will also be announced in the press release issued in concert with the ceremony.

Categories and entry numbers are as follow:

- Boating Columns – 21
- Boating Lifestyles – 24
- Boating Profiles – 20
- Boating Travel or Destinations – 26

- Boating Adventures – 18
- Boat/Engine Care and Maintenance – 20
- Ethics and Environment – invalid
- Fishing – 21
- Boating Issues, News and Analysis – 22
- The Business of Boating – 16
- Seamanship, Rescue & Safety – 25
- Technical Writing – 30
- Boat Tests & Reviews – 23
- Gear, Electronics and Product Tests – 18
- Boat Projects, Renovations & Retrofits – 17
- Online Expressions – 17
- Boating Photography – invalid

Cash awardees will be advised by email in early February that they “won something” and invited to retrieve it. Sponsors, noted nearby, will be invited as well to hand out the awards.

Results will be posted on www.bwi.org when announced and links to the winning entries will be added shortly thereafter.

Contest Categories & Sponsors

- Boating Columns** – sponsored by KVH Industries, Inc.
- Boating Lifestyles** – sponsored by Discover Boating
- Boating Profiles** – sponsored by ZF Marine
- Boating Travel or Destinations** – sponsored by Martin Flory Group
- Boating Adventures** – sponsored by Yamaha Marine
- Boat/Engine Care and Maintenance** – sponsored by Interlux Yacht Finishes
- Boating Photography** – sponsored by Freedom Boat Club
- Ethics and Environment** – sponsored by American Boat & Yacht Council
- Fishing** – sponsored by Suzuki Motor Corporation
- Boating Issues, News and Analysis** – sponsored by Mercury Marine
- The Business of Boating** – sponsored by Home Port Marine Marketing
- Seamanship, Rescue & Safety** – sponsored by Sea Tow Services International
- Technical Writing** – sponsored by Dometic Marine
- Boat Tests & Reviews** – sponsored by Volvo Penta
- Gear, Electronics & Product Tests** – sponsored by Xantrex/Schneider Electric
- Boat Projects, Renovations & Retrofits** – sponsored by Awlgrip North America
- Online Expressions** – sponsored by Boat Owners Assn. of the U.S.

Wrapup from the prez *continued*

Michael V. for judging the Innovation Awards, John for the always steady hand and good guidance. My wife Susan, who previously served on the board and understood, letting me take so much time to chase a dream.

As members you need to salute Greg Proteau, our Executive Director. Until you get to be President, you can't appreciate everything he does,

from fielding inane complaints to writing the newsletter, and of course managing our treasury, publicity, data files, website and awards competition.

As I write for the last time, my wish for BWI is that we each invite just one person to join. For you to mentor that younger person who has a blog or that you see at shows all the time. They do know more than we do. That's al-

ways true of the next generation. And the reason is because you wrote it down first so they can build upon your experience.

You can reach me at Alan@WendtPro.com.

Alan Wendt
BWI President

BWI Annual Meeting & Getting Around



The BWI meeting in Miami takes place on the traditional day and time – that's Friday morning February 12th. Doors open at 8 a.m. Location is the new show site on Virginia Key in the Waterside Cafe overlooking the in-water docks and adjacent to the water taxi drop offs. Timing provides a buffer for those navigating the new to-show transportation routine. The event is free of charge and sponsored by the National Marine Electronics Association, Freedom Boat Club and the National Marine Manufacturers Association.

Writing Awards will be presented along with a panel discussion focused on "How the Digital Revolution Has Changed What Editors Want From Freelancers and Marketers," to examine how the digital revolution has changed the editorial marketplace and what editors now expect.

A joint effort with colleagues from Marine Marketers of America, BWI and MMA Director Michael Sciulla will moderate a notable panel of editors, freelancers and marketers including: Gary Beckett, Owner/V.P. Turnkey Communications &

Public Relations; Kevin Falvey, Editor-in-Chief, Boating magazine; Marilyn Mower, Editorial Director-USA at Boat International Media; David Pilvelait, COO of Home Port Marketing; Jim Rhodes, President/CEO of Rhodes Communications;

Media can pick up badges at registration stations at the front entrance of the show on Virginia Key and at Strictly Sail at Bayside Marketplace. Note that without a media badge, press will be unable to take the water taxi to the show, unless they plan to purchase a ticket at the water taxi dock.

Buses and Water Taxis begin running at 7:30 a.m. for media and exhibitors and 9:30 a.m. for the general public.

There will be water taxis between the show on Virginia Key and Strictly Sail as well as Show Management's Yachts Miami Beach show. Yachts Miami Beach will be running buses from that location to the MIBS shuttle operation on Purdy Avenue on Miami Beach on the hour. For more information on transportation to and from the shows visit <http://www.miamiboatshow.com/public-transportation>.

and Bill Sisson, Editor-in-Chief, Soundings Publications.

The Miami International Boat Show is moving to its new home on Virginia Key at Miami Marine Stadium Park and Basin, February 11-15 (illustration at left). In addition to taking a taxi or Uber or driving and parking at an offsite parking lot, the show's transportation plan offers free water taxis and shuttle buses from various hotels and downtown locations, as well as from Strictly Sail Miami and Yachts Miami Beach.

Yachts Miami Beach

The newly-named yet 28th annual Yachts Miami Beach Show on Collins Avenue, which also runs February 11-15, displays yachts and super-yachts from around the world. The in-water-only presentation covers more than 1.2 million square feet of space over a mile-long strip of Indian Creek

Waterway, featuring hundreds of new and pre-owned vessels valued at more than a billion dollars.

The show is adding a new location at Island Gardens Marina on Watson Island and located on the MacArthur Causeway. Show Management produces Yachts Miami Beach and co-owns it with the Florida Yacht Brokers Association. For details and credential information, go to <http://media.showmanagement.com/>.



Miami Innovation Award Judges

NMMA and BWI have announced the panel of judges for the Miami International Boat Show Innovation Awards being presented during the annual Industry Breakfast on Thursday, February 11 at the new show site on Virginia Key.

The judges' committee is comprised of BWI members who perform product testing throughout the year and have specific expertise in marine products and equipment. The committee is chaired by Zuzana Prochazka, a boating and travel journalist and photographer who writes for a dozen magazines, serves as presenter at numerous international events and runs Zescapes, a sailing vacations tour operation.

Rounding out the panel of judges for the awards are:

- Alan Wendt. Miami co-chair and President of BWI, a frequent contributor to Lakeland Boating, and judge for Innovation Awards at both IBEX and Miami for the past



15 years.

- Nigel Calder is Associate/ Technical Editor with Professional BoatBuilder, Sail, PassageMaker, Yachting Monthly and Ocean Navigator. He is author several marine technical manuals.

- Lawrence Husick is a patent attorney, entrepreneur, freelance writer and life-long cruising sailor. He works with innovators in marine as counsel and consultant, and frequently speaks about new technologies afloat.

- Marilyn Mower has been a marine journalist for more than 30 years, editor of several boating magazines including the last five years as

Books Editor producing annual editions of The Superyachts, Megayachts: Concept, Design, Construction and Refit.

- Lenny Rudow has been a writer and editor in the marine field for more than two decades and currently serves as Senior Editor for Dominion Marine Media, including

Boats.com and Yachtworld.com, and is Electronics Editor for BoatUS Magazine.

- Gary Reich, a writer, editor, and photographer, has worked in marine for more than 25 years, with the last 15 focused in marine publishing. His writing and photos are seen in many periodicals.
- Frank Lanier is an Accredited Marine Surveyor and captain with over 35 years of experience in the marine and diving industry whose articles on seamanship, equipment reviews and maintenance appear in global publications.

Contact Rachel Timko, rtimko@nmma.org, for more information.

Send in Media Events at Shows

BWI collects and distributes media event information to members just before the Miami shows open. Though the list is not comprehensive, it does present an opportunity for Supporting and Associate members to get their events in the hands of BWI members who can then better plan their attack during the shows. If you are holding a media conference or new product

or service introduction, send details of the what, where and when by February 5 and it will be included. Send it to info@bwi.org.

When scheduling events, BWI kindly requests planners to avoid an overlap with its Annual Meeting, Writing Contest Awards Presentation and Newsmaker Event which has a long history of being held on Friday morning from

8 to 10 a.m. To check on other press events being scheduled, contact the media relations staff at the Miami International, Strictly Sail and Yachts Miami Beach shows.

For writers, it's always prudent to check on last minute additions to the events list as well as double-check times and locations. This can be done in the media rooms at various show locations.

Supporting Member News

Global Alliance For Electronics Trade

The National Marine Electronics Association (NMEA) has established a new affiliated non-profit corporation, the International Marine Electronics Alliance, Inc. (IMEA). IMEA is dedicated to maintaining and improving safety in maritime operations and pleasure boating through the use of electronics. Plans also include providing educational programs to enable military service veterans to transition into the marine electronics workforce through apprenticeship programs and cooperation with vocational institutions and advanced training programs for current employees. Find more detail at www.imea-marine.org.

Boat Sharing May Be Answer to Low Usage

According to Boatsetter, the average U.S. boat owner spends fewer than 12 days per year enjoying time on his or her vessel, but pays annual expenses for maintenance, dockage, fuel and storage. The company has established an online community where it says owners can safely share their vessels with others creating an income opportunity and a way to enhance the ownership experience. Boatsetter's model provides insurance for every rental, offers a network of U.S. Coast Guard-licensed captains that can be offered if the owner prefers, and controls details from rental price and availability to final approval of the rental request. Visit www.boatsetter.com.

Mercury is "Green" For Fifth Year In Row

Mercury Marine has earned "Green Master" designation from the Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council for the fifth consecutive year. The designation places the company among the top 20 percent of nearly 200 participants and few have received the designation five consecutive years. The Green Masters Program measures companies on issues such as energy and water conservation, waste management, community outreach and education. Mercury scored 599 total points, six points shy of the maximum, while the program average was 364. Contact Steve Fleming, Steve.Fleming@mercmarine.com.

BoatUS Offers Free Cruise Plan Course

Boating media is being offered a new online course, "Planning Your Cruise," courtesy of BoatUS and its Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water along with the U.S. Power Squadrons. It's designed to help power

and sailboat owners get more out of trips and prepare for the unexpected and targeted for those who have a limited amount of time for cruising inland or coastal waters. The course is normally \$30, but members of the boating media can access it at no cost: Go to www.BoatUS.org/Cruising and click "Get Started Now"; Complete the registration form and click "Create Registration" at the bottom; Click the small PayPal icon in the upper left hand corner of the course description page; In the pop-up window that appears, enter the coupon code "FREEPRESS". Contact Scott Croft, SCroft@BoatUS.com.

Features on NMMA's Updated Website

NMMA re-launched its website, www.NMMA.org, with a new design, enhanced navigation and fresh content. Some of the new resources that writers will find useful are:

- Global Events Calendar: Upcoming industry events and meetings around the world sortable by region.
- Issues Tracker: Federal and state legislative and regulatory issues affecting recreational boating and access.
- News Feed: What's happening in the boating industry with this daily news feed.
- Statistics: Access industry statistics and research and order reports.
- Certification: Information on NMMA Boat and Yacht, Oil, PWC and Trailer Certification, CSI, technical seminars and training, international standards, and more.



Powerboat Sales Up Again in '15

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New powerboat sales are on a multi-year rise and may eclipse pre-recession levels in 2016. NMMA is estimating new powerboat unit sales will be up as much as eight percent in 2015 when the industry tallies its final figures.

"A steadily improving economy and flurry of product innovation have boosted new powerboat sales, which is encouraging to see as we head into the winter boat show season, one of the busiest selling periods of the year," said Thom Dammrich, NMMA president. "We anticipate six to eight percent growth in 2016 which would take total new powerboat sales back to pre-recession levels of 250,000 units."

The powerboat segment is comprised of outboard boats, wake sport boats, inboard cruisers, sterndrive boats, jet boats and personal watercraft. Most powerboat categories experienced year-over-year growth through the second quarter of 2015, including: jet boats, up 18.1 percent; wake sport boats, up 12.1 percent; deck boats, up 11.3 percent; personal watercraft, up 8.2 percent; pontoon boats, up 6.6 percent; and bass boats, up 5.3 percent. Other fiber-

glass outboard boats (including center console boats, sportfishing boats, and flats boats) were up 11.1 percent, and other aluminum outboard boats (including all-purpose fishing boats and jon boats) were up 5.8 percent.

Sales of larger boats, particularly those equipped for

offshore fishing, are on the rise following a sharp decline during the recession. Sales of new powerboats 40 feet and above were up 9.4 percent through June.

To view the complete release, go to www.nmma.org/press/article/20267.



New Active & Associate Members

Jan Adkins, Writer/Artist, Gainesville, FL
 Bill Band, Freelance Writer, Towson, MD
 Don Casey, Freelance Writer, Miami Springs, FL
 Troy Gilbert, Freelance Writer, New Orleans, LA
 Nathalie Gouillou, Associate Editor, Fort Lauderdale, FL
 Al Jacobs, Freelance Writer, Homerville, GA
 Jacob Lamb, Managing Editor, Winter Park, FL
 Brian Mistrot, Freelance Writer, Vancouver, WA
 Melanie Neale, Writer/Editor, St. Augustine, FL
 Mickey Raup, Freelance Writer, Riva, MD
 John Roberson, Freelance Writer, Freemantle, Australia
 Roxanne Rockvam, Freelance Writer, Spring Park, MN
 Jim Seidel, Marketing Consultant, Neptune, NJ
 Karen Soule, Freelance Writer, Richmond, VA
 Nancy Spraker, Freelance Writer, Marietta, GA
 John Stefancik, Publisher, Annapolis, MD
 Mark Tux Turkel, Freelance Writer, Yarmouth, ME

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.

