

Inside this issue:

Writing Contest Accepting Entries	2
Elections On Horizon	
Double Your Dona- tion for Scholarships	3
Announce Marketing Awards	
Active Member News	4
Supporters News	5
Calendar & Events	6

It's Annual Writing Contest Time

It's that time of year again. The BWI annual writing contest is now open for entries and this year we'll be giving away \$15,000 in prize money to 45 worthy winners – and Certificates of Merit for honorable efforts. But before entering the contest, I urge everyone to first go to this link on bwi.org and read some winning entries from last year to see what resonates with the judges.

If you never judged in this contest, this year you should change that. Not only will you be helping our organization but it will also help you get a better appreciation of how entries are viewed.

A common theme among winning articles is a strong lead. Picture a judge in a popular category like Boating Travel or Destinations, which received 33 mostly feature-length entries. If you don't grab their attention in the first few paragraphs, it's probably going nowhere.

If I could just use one word to categorize writing that doesn't score well, it's "pedantic." Often, writers fall into the trap of flinging so many unadorned facts at the reader to show how knowl-



Lenny Rudow (l.), an occasional Contest award recipient, accepts a 2018 Fishing category award from sponsor Dean Corbisier of Suzuki. Photo: Ron Ballanti.

edgeable they are, it reads like a textbook. Great writers find a unique angle from which to approach a subject; there's a theme that's interlaced through the entire article that ties everything together.

One thing you'll probably notice from winning entries is a strong sense of flow. The sentences are intertwined and they lead the reader on a journey. And if it's really good, the reader will be sorry when it's finished. Sometimes writers forget we are not just in the information-dispensing business, we are also entertainers. Even the IRS categorizes us with artists, entertainers and athletes (I always laugh at the last one).

My last bit of advice is to

spray some buckshot. If you only have two entries it might be years before you hear your name mentioned in Miami at the awards ceremony. This is your time to shine and show the industry you are one of the best writers out there. For new, freelance writers, it's probably the best way to get your name out there and editors do take notice when they hear someone's name mentioned.

I am really surprised that two of our newer categories haven't gained

more traction. Last year, the Photography category only got the minimum 10 entries, which is surprising since most of us take lots of photos. Considering the direction of our industry, I was shocked the Video category only received 16 entries. Most of us spend lots of time on social media (whether we like it or not) and videos seem to be the currency of choice. All it takes to enter is a Facebook or YouTube link. Remember: You've got to be in it to win it.

You can reach me at boatscribe@comcast.net.

Alan Jones
BWI President

Writing & Imaging Contest Underway

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 Kicker Marine Audio

Boating Adventures – sponsored by Yamaha Marine

Boating Photography – sponsored by Freedom Boat Club

Environmental Awareness & Education – sponsored by Torqeedo Inc.

Fishing – sponsored by Suzuki Motor Corporation

Boating Issues, News and Analysis – sponsored by Mercury Marine

The Business of Boating – sponsored by Evinrude

Seamanship, Rescue & Safety – sponsored by Sea Tow Services International

Boat Tests & Reviews – sponsored by Volvo Penta

Gear, Electronics & Product Tests – sponsored by Xantrex/Schneider Electric

Boat Projects, Renovations & Retrofits – sponsored by BoatsGroup

Boating Videos – sponsored by Boat Owners Assn. of the U.S.

BWI's Annual Writing Contest marks its 27th year to recognize exceptional creativity in boating journalism, photography and videography. Entries are being accepted in 15 categories which translates to \$15,000 available in prize awards. All of the details are included in a brochure posted at <https://www.bwi.org/downloads/BWI-Contest-19.pdf>. The electronic entry form (<https://bwi.org/bwicontest>) provides the process for uploading entries, "doing the paperwork," and paying dues by check or PayPal or through a publisher. BWI members get two free entries; non-members can enter at \$50 apiece (or join for \$100 and get the two free entries).

This year's categories include those recently added or revised: "Boating Lifestyles," "Boat Projects, Renovations & Retrofits," "Boating Videos," and "Boating Photography." Entries in all categories are welcome from digital-only -- including blogs and on-line



videos -- or traditional print sources. Category definitions are included in the contest brochure.

The contest recognizes the best marine writing and imaging in the world and presents cash awards to first- (\$500), second- (\$300) and third-place (\$200) scorers in each category. Presentation of awards will be made at the Miami International Boat Show during the BWI Annual Meeting in February 2020.

Deadline for entries is December 31, 2019.

Candidates Sought for Directors

Elections for BWI Directors will be held in January. Three seats (that carry three-year terms) are coming open. Active and Associate members may run for Directors spots, and active and associate members will be asked to vote in the election.

Those who think they'd like to serve are encouraged to run. Duties include participation in two in-person director

meetings a year (no expenses paid), usually held in conjunction with Miami and Ft.

Lauderdale boat shows, availability for as-needed conference calls, and volunteering for assignments such as Committee chairperson, new product or writing contest category chair, etc. For more information, contact Greg Proteau, info@bwi.org.

Candidates need to pro-

vide a brief summary, by mid-December, of their experience, qualifications and ideas to help BWI grow. Summaries are reviewed by the nominating committee which consists of the President, Immediate Past President and Executive Director. These are provided to the members along with the ballot when voting commences in January.

Double Your \$ With BWI Scholarships

It's not often that you can make an investment and immediately double your money, but an anonymous donor to the BWI Scholarship Fund has allowed us to do just that. Until December 31, when a BWI member makes a donation to the BWI Scholarship Fund it will be matched 100%, up to \$2,000.

The Fund hopes to continue awarding scholarships each year to a deserving college student pursuing a career in boating journalism, photography, video, broadcasting, film, or art. Last year's recipient, Carly Sisson, is pursuing a BS in English at



the University of Vermont and working as a contributing editor at *Power & Motor Yacht* magazine.

"It's great to know that the

impact of the donation gets doubled," stated Fund president Lenny Rudow. "And your contribution works twice as hard to support a young future boating writer. We should all take full advantage of this opportunity, ASAP."

Donations can qualify as tax deductible as the fund is a 501(c)(3) non-profit entity. They should be mailed to 4599 Deep River Place, Jacksonville, FL 32224. Additional details about making donations or applying for the scholarship can be found on the BWI website, <https://www.bwi.org/scholarship-apps-donations/>.

Marketing Awards Seek Entries

Marine Marketers of America (MMA) is accepting entries for the 2019 Neptune Awards competition, which they say is the most prestigious recognition program for marine marketers in North America. The annual contest, now in its 12th year, is open to any company or organization producing and publishing marine industry marketing in calendar year 2019. Entries will be accepted through January 13, 2020. The awards will be presented at the Miami International Boat Show in February 2020.

Crystal Neptune awards will be presented in 20 categories, covering all areas of marketing, from national and regional magazine and digital



ads and newsletters to video, product literature, PR, marketing innovation and diversity initiatives. In addition, a best-in-show "King Neptune" will be awarded to the top entry among all categories. The submissions will be scored by panels of inde-

pendent judges following established criteria.

Sally Helme, MMA vice president and awards committee co-chair, said: "The Neptune Awards have become increasingly competitive through the years as reflected in the exceptionally high level of creativity and quality in the entries submitted." Last year's competition drew a record high of 172 entries in 20 categories from 48 companies, according to Helme.

Complete program details, including entry guidelines and the official entry form, are available for view and download at www.marine-marketersofamerica.org.

Active & Associate Members News



2019 IBEX Show Innovation Judges and BWI members (from l.) Zuzana Prochazka, Alan Wendt, Brady Kay, Barb Carey, Phil Gutowski, Debbie Hanson and Andy Adams.

Wendt Looks Back On Judging Service

BWI past president Alan Wendt sees his 18 years of judging boating innovations coming to an end in Miami next year. "BWI members benefited from the efforts that Zuzana Prochazka and I championed behind the scenes. We lobbied successfully for an increase in the number of judges which meant more members had their expenses comped, letting them gain assignments and more stories behind the product. For NMMA, we added an Award program at the Minneapolis Boat Show – three more BWI members get to judge. Together we purposely selected a gender-balanced team of judges at IBEX and Miami.

"Perhaps our greatest accomplishment was developing a system that insured every entrant got their product in front of the judges, instead of a shortlist. IBEX had a record 103 entries this year. My thanks to Roger Marshall who took a chance on mentoring me as a new writer 20 years ago to serve in the judging role." Contact Wendt at alan@wendtpro.com.

Martin Flory Growing

Publisher of over 1,000 commercial and recreational nautical titles, ProStar Publications has hired Martin Flory Group to promote its products and corporate news throughout North America. The agency was also retained for similar service by Safashor Products International, designer and manufacturer of dock and boat gangplank systems. Contact Kelly Flory, info@martinflory.com.

Ladies Gain Fish At Tampa Boat Show

The Ladies, Let's Go Fishing Learn to Fish event at the Tampa Boat Show in October offered instruction on inshore fishing, hands-on skill practice with guides and was preceded by a Freedom Boat Club cruise. Betty Bauman, founder of Ladies, Let's Go Fishing, led the instruction along with several other lady fishing captains. "We thank the boat show for their attention to women, who represent 45 percent of all new anglers and offer tremendous potential for fishing industry growth," said Bauman. Contact her at fish@ladiesletsgofishing.com.

BWI-ers Join Forces To Rep Kicker Marine

PR Power's Marilyn DeMartini, a veteran of the powerboat circuit, and Kenton Smith Marketing's Wanda Kenton Smith, with years of industry experience, have partnered on a joint initiative for Kicker Marine Audio. They will assist with communications and brand marketing initiatives, promotions and sponsorships, and special events. In an early move, Kicker Marine has signed on to sponsor the Boating Travel or Destinations category in this year's BWI Writing Contest. Kicker Marine's components include durable and waterproof source units, subwoofers, coaxials, amplifiers, towers and enclosures with colorful lighting incorporated into speaker systems. Contact DeMartini, md@prpower.biz and Kenton Smith, wanda@kentonsmithmarketing.com.

Good Old Boat Adding Freelancers

Now in its second year of new ownership, *Good Old Boat* magazine is launching a re-design with its January 2020 issue and is seeking additional freelance contributors. Editors are looking for short (500- to 1,500-word) DIY or technical pieces that have to do with experiences of owning, maintaining, upgrading, and sailing a production boat. For more information and to understand the magazine's needs, contact Michael Robertson, michael_r@goodoldboat.com.

Supporting Member News

Wide Reach for Sea Tow Safety Effort

The Sea Tow Foundation, a nationwide nonprofit organization, has reported 2017-2018 results for its Sober Skipper program. Launched in 2015 and now in more than 180 cities across 51 states and territories, the program encourages boaters to be or to designate a Sober Skipper. The campaign is funded through a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund. "We have seen over 8.4 million people reached by the Sober Skipper Program this year," Foundation executive Gail Kulp said. "The media generated by the Program this year was valued at over \$215,000, which is more than double the amount of grant funding that the project was awarded." Details at www.sober-skipper.com.

North America Boat Standards Set

Transport Canada Marine Safety and Security (TCMSS) has published a policy on the acceptance of ABYC standards as an approved alternative method for small vessel compliance in Canada. The policy is effective as of October 30, 2019. "Having one set of standards throughout North America is a huge benefit for engineering, manufacturing, and trade for the marine industry," said Craig Scholten, ABYC Technical VP. "Being able to design, certify, and produce product to one standard will streamline and sim-

plify everyone's efforts." TCMSS will accept the equivalent standards published by ABYC with some Canadian modifications. The policy affects pleasure craft less than 24 meters and other craft of not more than 15 gross tonnage constructed, manufactured or rebuilt in, or imported into Canada. Contact Scholten, cscholten@abycinc.org.

Leadership Change For Volvo Penta

Volvo Penta of the Americas president Ron Huibers has announced that he will retire at the start of 2020. Huibers has served for 26 years at Volvo Penta, Volvo and Mack Trucks, Volvo Finance and Volvo Construction Equipment. He will assume new responsibilities with the firm supporting Volvo Penta president and CEO Bjorn Inge-manson as a senior advisor. He will be succeeded as president of Volvo Penta by current global CFO and business office SVP, Martin Bjuve. Bjuve has been with Volvo Penta for 17 years. As SVP, global CFO and a member of the Executive Group, his daily responsibilities include overall strategy development, as well as process and IT.

Paddle Sports To Get New Funding

Growth of paddlesports including stand-up paddleboarding, kayaking and canoeing has local, state and federal governments considering paddler access, including paddlecraft-only launches,



BWI president Alan Jones (l.) presents a plaque to ZF Marine's Martin Meissner to recognize the company's decade-long hospitality to media at the Fort Lauderdale Boat Show. ZF's annual breakfast gatherings featuring German fare at FLIBS have become a popular pre-show opening event since the power products manufacturer began hosting it. Photo: Ron Ballanti.

efforts to ensure paddler safety, and minimizing user conflicts with traditional boaters. To pay for the enhancements legislators are looking to a federal funding mechanism that generates revenue from recreational power, sail, and fishing boat owners. BoatUS Government Affairs reports a newly introduced bill, the Sport Fish Restoration and Recreational Boating Safety Act of 2019, gives the Government Accountability Office an opportunity to examine use of non-motorized vessels and impacts on existing launches, user conflicts and support for non-motorized boating safety programs. It will also look at boat recycling, a concern for some waterfront communities. Contact Scott Croft, SCroft@BoatUS.com.

Calendar & Events

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Innovations Wanted In Minneapolis & Miami

Minneapolis and Miami International Boat Show Innovation Awards programs are accepting submissions. Up north, the program offers three categories: aluminum fishing boats, fiberglass fishing boats and pontoon boats. Down south a whopping 26 categories offer a chance for recognition.

Deadlines are December 20 in Minneapolis and January 14 at MIBS. Details at www.nmma.org/shows/innovation. Contact Melissa Taylor, mtaylor@nmma.org.

NMEA Training Dates

National Marine Electronics Association Installer Training sessions are scheduled for Newport, RI December 10 to 13. Courses cover Basic, NMEA2000, Advanced and Advanced NMEA2000. Dates and locations for 2020 have also been set and posted at www.nmea.org under the "Training" tab, as are registration details. Contact Cindy Love, clove@nmea.org.

St. Pete Boat Show

The 42nd Annual St. Petersburg Power and Sailboat Show, produced by Informa



Markets, is set for December 5 to 8 with more than 400 boats on display, both on land and in-water, and nearly 250 exhibitors. Information on tickets, special events, and parking can be found at www.stpeteboatshow.com/en/home.html. Contact Cindi Perantoni or Laura Acker, informamedia@krepspr.com.

Boat Standards Week Set for January 6 - 10

The American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC), the non-profit organization that develops the safety standards for the design, construction, maintenance and repair of recreational boats, has announced its 11th annual ABYC Standards Week, January 6-10, 2020 in New Orleans, LA.

ABYC standards cover all major boat systems and a broad range of topics including U.S. Federal requirements. The standards are continuously reviewed and revised by over 400 volunteers participating in Project Technical Committees (PTCs). Throughout Standards Week, PTCs meet to update the standards under review. Other events occurring during the week include ABYC's annual meeting and cocktail reception, the full-day Marine Law Symposium, and ABYC Standards Certification course. Information on events can be found at www.abycstandardsweek.com. Contact Shannon Aronson, saronson@abycinc.org.

Leadership Award Seeks Nominations

Nominations are being accepted for the 2020 Alan J. Freedman Memorial Leadership Award recognizing individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the marine accessories industry; included for consideration are members of marine-focused media. Deadline for nominations are December 13; see details at www.nmma.org/industry-awards.

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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 marine organizations.