



## WATER THERAPY

*Spending time on the water is the best medicine.*

*by Charlie Levine, BWI President*

It's called "doomscrolling," and I, like many others, am afflicted. Doomscrolling is the act of thumbing through social media and headlines on your phone. The news feed never stops and you can scroll endlessly. For a while there, I would doomscroll before going to bed, which caused my anxiety to rise, making it near impossible to get a good night's sleep. It's not just bad for you emotionally, it's also bad for you physically. Experts have noted a major uptick in doomscrolling and said it can lead to other unhealthy habits like eating too much comfort food, imbibing more booze than normal or falling into depression. But have no fear, I have found the cure... Go boating!

I'm far from the only one who has turned to the water to escape the headlines and feel normal for a minute. Boating participation is up as are boat sales. Demand at boat clubs is surging. These are all good things, but as communicators, we need to not only embrace new boaters, we also need to help convert them to lifelong boaters. Discover Boating and the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation did an incredible job reaching new boaters this summer. Their social campaigns and PSAs reached

millions of newbies and I firmly believe this outreach helped drive boat sales and interest in the boating lifestyle.

But if you spent any time at a launch ramp or marina this summer, it wasn't hard to identify the new boater from the salty veteran. A quick call to a boatyard also confirmed what I pretty much had already figured, the need for fiberglass work is higher than any point in recent memory because of collisions. The bottom line: we need to educate these folks.

Think about the topics that meant the most to you as a new boater: docking, routine maintenance and general navigation. It may be a good time to revisit those topics. We need to lend all of our boaters a helping hand.

On another note, it looks like Informa is pushing ahead with the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show. At our last BWI board meeting, the consensus was that most of us do not plan on attending. Personally, I'm torn. I miss boat shows. I miss the opportunity to see my industry friends and all of the new hardware from all of the major players in one spot. And because I live in Florida, I won't need to jump on a plane. I will probably head to Lauderdale for at least a day, but I'm

still on the fence.

If the show does in fact go on, it will be unlike any other we've ever seen. What will attendance look like? What manufacturers are going to show up? Only time will tell.



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# IBEX INNOVATION AWARDS

IBEX 2020 has been moved to an online event and is slated for the end of September this year. This is one of three NMMA shows where Innovation Awards are normally judged by our own BWI members a few days before the show opens. This IBEX was different. The winners have already been selected although they won't be announced until September 29 at 10:30 at the opening of the show.

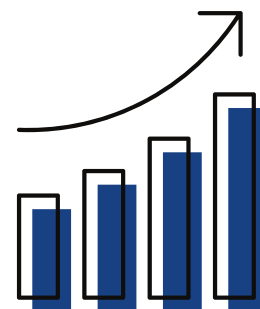


The judges had to roll with all the usual COVID hang-ups as it was done via Zoom. Challenges of doing 7+ hour days on a video platform are many so the judging slate was cut to five from the usual eight. Because these judges weren't able to enjoy actually attending the show, networking and learning about all the event has to offer, NMMA offered a stipend in lieu of the costs associated with the judges' travel. This stipend will be donated to BWI and we have the judges to thank for their volunteer time in the name of the greater good.

The judging slate included: Brady Kay, executive editor of Pontoon & Deck Boat. Ed Sherman, retired vice president of the ABYC. Greg Thornton, client services director at BoatTest.com. Ben Stein, awards co-chair and editor of Panbo.com. Zuzana Prochazka, awards chair and Executive Director of BWI.

## FUN WITH STATISTICS

Numbers don't lie but they can be a funny animal if you don't delve deeper. Whether it's COVID cases or boat sales, we've been inundated with facts and figures this year and if there's a lesson in all this, it's to go beyond the headline to suss out the critical information that numbers provide.



On August 25, Soundings Trade Only published: "Registrations jumped 44.3 percent year-over-year in the main categories, according to Statistical Surveys Inc., which tracked data from 22 early-reporting states." The 44% figure relates to the month of July (year-over-year) since YTD sales for 2019-2020 overall in the same boat categories were up just 3%.

Boats and RVs have been selling wildly and July was the first time that many people rolled out of their PJs and shopped for their next hobby, which may be why the July numbers were so high.

Additional figures published on September 3 showed that 88% of companies furloughed or laid off employees and 94% saw a decrease in revenue. Soundings also mentioned, "...81% of Americans say they've spent time outdoors during the pandemic, 31% of which for the first time."

Meanwhile, Boating Industry highlighted some information from NMMA's Q2 2020 Marine CEO Sentiment Report. "...49% of CEOs reported current business conditions were stable, another 39% reported business was expanding, and 11% reported business was declining, on par with sentiment levels prior to the pandemic.

So, which is it? Has the pandemic been a booster shot for the marine industry or has it been devastating like elsewhere? The answer is both, you just have to dig into the numbers. How much of this uptick will last past 18 months since a third of people haven't been too outdoorsy to date? Will they stick with it? We won't know how we'll come out of this for a while but we do know that numbers (as well as anecdotal information) were meant to be digested whole.

# NEW BWI.ORG COMING SOON

We're aware that the old BWI website bit the dust a few weeks ago. The old template was just beyond even one more Band-Aid. Unfortunately, it went south just two months before we were expecting to have its replacement.

We're working on the revamped BWI.org with fresh content and new images and expect to have it available by the beginning of October. In the meantime, if you have questions or need to make a membership payment, please email us at [newbwiinfo@gmail.com](mailto:newbwiinfo@gmail.com).

## MEMBER NEWS

### ***BoatUS Foundation Partners with Fishing Tackle Company, Berkley***

BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water and fishing tackle company Berkley have teamed up for a year-long Recast and Recycle Contest that seeks out improvements or technology breakthroughs to the fishing line recycling process. The goal is to ultimately increase the volume of line and soft bait recycling in the U.S. A total of \$30,000 in prize money is at stake (\$15,000 1st place, \$10,000 2nd place, \$5,000 3rd place).

Recycling fishing line is costly and labor-intensive. Discarded line can end up in waterways and landfills where it remains a problem for birds and wildlife. There are currently no nationwide recycling programs for fishing-related materials like soft baits. Deadline for submissions: May 14, 2021.



Photo Courtesy of BoatUS.

### ***Boston Whaler Debuts Vantage 240, "Swiss Army Knife of Boats"***

Boston Whaler taps into the COVID-driven demographic with their new Vantage 240 that they're dubbing the Swiss Army Knife of boats. The model is a crossover that can fish, tow and entertain so it appeals to the needs of a family, which is possibly new to boating. At just 24 feet and powered by a single outboard, this is the kind of boat that many families are turning to when looking for socially distanced and affordable outdoor entertainment. It's likely we'll see more such offerings from other builders as well.



Photo Courtesy of Boston Whaler.

# CALENDAR & EVENTS

## Updates on Fall Boat Shows

Much has changed since the July newsletter. Numerous boat shows that were expected to run as onsite events went virtual or cancelled completely. Here's the latest but remember, the only constant is change.

### IBEX

Virtual: Sept. 29 - Oct. 1.

Admission is free.

Seminar sessions are paid.

[www.lbexshow.com](http://www.lbexshow.com)

## BETTER BOATS BEGIN HERE



### Cannes Yachting Festival and Monaco Yacht Show

With less than three weeks to showtime, Cannes was cancelled on Aug. 21 and the next Monaco Yacht Show is expected to welcome guests Sept. 2021. [Monacoyachtshow.com/en/](http://Monacoyachtshow.com/en/)

### Annapolis Shows

Both the power and sailboat shows that are held in the first two weeks of October have cancelled. [Annapolisboatshows.com](http://Annapolisboatshows.com)

### FLIBS

As of press time and with six weeks to go, Fort Lauderdale (FLIBS) show is still an in-person event October 28-Nov 1. [FLIBS.com](http://FLIBS.com)



Photo Courtesy of FLIBS/Informa.

### METS

METS decided to forgo the virtual component and cancelled its mid-November gathering. [Metstrade.com](http://Metstrade.com)

### Boat & Fun Berlin

At the moment, the Berlin Boat Show, which is to be held Nov. 19-22 is still on. Considering that it's an all-indoor show, stay tuned for updates. [Boot-berlin.com](http://Boot-berlin.com)

### International Workboat Show

Still scheduled as an in-person event December 15-17 in New Orleans. [Workboatshow.com](http://Workboatshow.com)

### Boot Dusseldorf

The world's largest indoor boat show, which welcomes 250,000 attendees annually, is still scheduled as a live event for January 2021. [Boot.com](http://Boot.com)

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The BWI Journal is produced by and for members of Boating Writers International and can be found at [www.bwi.org](http://www.bwi.org). Send items to be considered for publication to Zuzana Prochazka, [info@bwi.org](mailto: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, videographers and broadcasters. Associate members are generally PR or communications firms. Supporting members are usually manufacturers or marine organizations.

## WELCOME

### New Members

#### Boston Whaler

#### Supporting Member