



THE GREATEST GIG

by Brady Kay, BWI President

La-Z-Boy endurance tester. Sam L. Jackson's hair stylist. Stevie Wonder's ironing lady. These are some of the sweetest jobs in the world, but they rank down there with the guy running the pump out dock after a holiday weekend compared to the job I've been promoted to. Hang on to your hats and sunglasses; I'm now at the helm of Boating Writers International as the new president.

Despite setting a goal to one day be in this position, my time as a member on the BWI board of directors has gone quicker than anticipated and I'm humbled to follow in the wake of a long list of outstanding men and women who have served as BWI presidents before me.

There are many benefits and reasons why marine journalists join BWI including our annual writing contest, eligibility to participate in NMMA Innovation Award judging, the directory, etc. Who knows, maybe some join so they can hang out at the BWI breakfast at the Miami International Boat Show and possibly walk away with a raffle prize or a sponsor giveaway because you know journalists love free swag like a fat man loves Sara Lee.

For me, it was the networking

opportunities that originally lured me to BWI over 15 years ago. My membership not only helped further my career, but also provided opportunities to build lifelong friendships with other members of the media.

I've spent time in other industries and I'm always amazed at how well boating journalists play together. Not to pick on the auto industry, but it's clearly not the same. Boaters in general are some of the friendliest and most laid-back people you'll ever meet, so it should come as no surprise the journalists who cover this industry are too.

As the incoming president, with the full support of the current board of directors and the executive director, our determination to grow the BWI membership and provide added value is our top priority. Yes, our annual writing contest where thousands of dollars in prize money is given out will continue to rank high on the benefits list, but we want networking to be a close second as we work together as journalists to let others fully appreciate and understand all that boating and the boating lifestyle has to offer.

I'm looking forward to serving in this new role as president and hopefully in the near future we'll have the opportunity to mingle once again in person at a boat show or test event.

Inside this issue:

Page 02 - 03
General News

Page 02 - 04
Member News

Page 05
Calendar of Events &
New Members

RUDOW'S WRITING TIPS

One of the best benefits of being a BWI member is participating in our yearly writing contest. It gives each and every one of us the opportunity to win recognition in the field, check out (and learn from) the best writing of our peers, and maybe even pocket a little bit of extra cash. But success in the contest seems to come easier for some folks than for others. In most cases this isn't a matter of skill, talent, or even luck — it's a matter of hard work. To really excel in the BWI writing contest, you have to make a directed effort to win. Here are some pointers that may come in handy.



- Visit the writing contest page on BWI's website and read through the Judging Criteria multiple times throughout the year. Then ask yourself the scoring questions as you proofread your own work. Bottom line, those criteria are designed to identify quality writing. The exercise of "scoring" your own work while it's in the drafting stages can have a dramatic effect on the quality of the work you produce — whether it gets entered in the contest or not.
- Don't be afraid to enter lots of articles. If you ever find yourself sitting on the fence as to whether an article is worth entering, consider it a no-brainer that you should put it in the contest. Different judges rank articles differently and you never know what the competition may be like in any given category, so hedging your bets with multiple entries is a good move. In fact, the members who are most successful in the contest are often making five, 10, or even more different entries in any given year.
- More than once, I've spoken with top-tier writers who entered one or two pieces in the contest, didn't win, and quit trying as a result. As is true with many things in life, a key to success is persistence. My first BWI award came in 1997, but only after five years of entering fruitlessly. I was certainly tempted not to even try at that point, but kept plugging along. Persistence. Is. Key.
- Be careful when prepping your work for entry. More than one magnificent article has been disqualified because of a failure to block out all references to the author's or publication's name.
- Volunteer to be a judge (just email info@bwi.org right now, to raise your virtual hand). This will allow you to see what it's like from the judge's perspective, reading all the different articles in a category and seeing what makes some stand out. It's also a valuable learning experience from your perspective as a writer, to check out the top work of your peers in the field.

If you follow all five of these tips, are you guaranteed a win next year? Heck no. But at the very least, it will make you a better writer. And if you're persistent, chances are that sooner or later a panel of BWI writing contest judges will agree.

Lenny Rudow is editor of Fishtalk magazine, a BWI board member and a perennial BWI Contest winner. His guidance is golden.

2020 BWI ANNUAL CONTEST

The winners of the 2020 BWI Annual Contest were announced via virtual event on Thursday, February 18. If you missed it, you can see the [presentation here](#). We had 283 entries by 108 entrants and we awarded 29 Certificates of Merit. More details in the press release [posted here on BWI.org](#). Congratulations to all. Also, a great big thanks to all the chairs and judges as well as our 15 Contest sponsors who made it all possible. As they say, the check (and plaque) is in the mail.

BWI NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BWI has a new Board of Directors including Brady Kay (President), Ron Ballanti (1st Vice President) and Kim Koditek (2nd Vice President). New members Steve Davis and Adam Quandt join the other directors including Lenny Rudow and Ben Stein. Alan Jones has been appointed to a one-year term and Charlie Levine moves to Past President. Welcome all and we look forward to great support and work on BWI's behalf going forward.

BWI SCHOLARSHIP FUND OBTAINS SPONSOR, NAMES 2021 SCHOLAR

Robert Beringer has shared that Active Interest Media is now the title sponsor of the BWI Scholarship, awarded each year to a college student interested in pursuing a career in boating journalism, and it has been renamed in their honor.

And after careful consideration of applications received, the judges' panel has determined that Ryan Gullang, a junior majoring in English at St. Mary's College of Maryland will be the 2021 recipient of the BWI Active Interest Media Boating Journalist Scholarship.



"Ryan seems to be the type of individual who would be an asset to the boating media community," wrote one judge. "I especially like that he allocates a lot of time in helping others. One of the greatest attributes a boating writer should have in abundance is intellectual curiosity and he seems to check that box."

Dr. Colby Nelson, a senior lecturer at St. Mary's had the following to say: "I believe Ryan would make an excellent journalist and this scholarship would allow him to be supported as he pursues his talent and interests. I recommend him highly. Furthermore, the publication of his writing in Spinsheet.com and *FishTalk* magazine is a further testament to how seriously and thoughtfully he has applied himself to the craft of writing."

And from Ryan's career goal statement. "I want to open the door for people to understand and fall in love with the water as I did. The more I've gotten involved with the marine journalism industry, the more I've come to understand that writing is a great avenue to do so. It would mean so much to me to know that my work inspired someone to take a sailing class or buy a fishing rod. Seeing as boating and water sports can be so technical, it can be prohibitively overwhelming even for the experienced. I want my writing to help people get the most out of the water that's given me so much."

PASSING OF BOB FISHER

Past President, Bob Black, wrote of the passing of Bob Fisher. Fisher and Black covered several America's Cups (AC) dating back to 1970 as well as the sailing venue Olympics of 1976 and 1984. Per Black, Fisher was wild and brash and had extensive AC knowledge and also was a competitive sailor of note, particularly in catamarans. "He was the de facto leader of SINS (Society of Nautical Scribes)", writes Black. "He lived and breathed sailing (and beer) and was slightly larger than life."

MEMBER NEWS

SUZUKI: NEW TAMPA HEADQUARTERS

Suzuki's Gus Blakely's announced Suzuki Marine's imminent move to Tampa, Florida as well as updates on the new Technical Center in Panama City. Suzuki is moving forward with their global Clean Up the World and Clean Oceans Project campaigns, as they prepare to integrate their new Microplastics Collection System into their accessories and outboard motor line-up.

Hopefully, our writers will soon be able to visit the Suzuki Oasis (and headquarters) to check out the initiatives and products.



DISCOVER BOATING LAUNCHES 2021 ULTIMATE BOAT SHOW INSIDER GUIDE

With many boat shows on pause for 2021, Discover Boating has launched a content collection to help guide boaters in the year ahead. The [new Ultimate Boat Show Insider Guide](#) features a round-up of new boats and boating gear, tips and useful information all in one place, specifically created to inspire and educate new and dedicated boat buyers. Topics range from advice for new boat owners, to best practices for green boating and off-the-grid boating destinations.



"This guide is one way we're engaging Discover Boating and NMMA Boat & Sport Shows audiences, making sure we're staying in touch with them and keeping boating top-of-mind as they start dreaming of experiences they want to have with friends and family in 2021 and beyond," said Ellen Bradley, NMMA Senior Vice President & Chief Brand Officer.

Industry stakeholders are encouraged to share the [Ultimate Boat Show Insider Guide](#) on social channels, websites and in emails to help engage, educate and connect with customers and stay tuned for an online toolkit featuring sample social posts and newsletter copy.

MEMBER NEWS (CONT.)

SIREN MARINE ANNOUNCES SUCCESSION PLAN

In the wake of the recent tragic passing of CEO and Founder Daniel A. Harper, Siren Marine announced a new leadership team led by (former) COO Jeffrey Poole who moves to the position of CEO. "Dan left us unexpectedly and we will all miss him. While at the helm, he followed his captain's instincts and had things mindfully in place - a sound ship, trusted crew and most importantly, a carefully chartered course.

Siren Marine is a solid company with over 11 years of experience to its name. We know what we need to do, and we are prepared. I have every confidence we will continue to be the leading force of smart boat technology in the marine industry with tremendous growth on the near horizon," shared Poole.

CALENDAR & EVENTS

Stay tuned for upcoming announcements.

BWI Officers

President
Brady Kay
blk@harrispublishing.com

1st Vice President
Ron Ballanti
ron@strike-zone.net

2nd Vice President
Kim Koditek
kkoditek@nmma.org

BWI Past President

Charlie Levine
clevine@aimmedia.com

BWI Directors

Alan Jones ('21)
boatscribe@comcast.net

Lenny Rudow ('22)
ultangler@gmail.com

Adam Quandt ('23)
Aquandt23@gmail.com

Steve Davis ('23)
steve@southernboating.com

Ben Stein ('23)
ben.stein@panbo.com

Executive Director

Zuzana Prochazka
newbwiinfo@gmail.com

The BWI Journal is produced by and for members of Boating Writers International and can be found at www.bwi.org. Send items to be considered for publication to Zuzana Prochazka, 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

Active Members

Andy Cross
Freelance Writer
Naples, FL

Harun Kazaz
Editor/Publisher
Brooklyn, NY

Jamie Gifford
Freelance Writer
Seattle, WA

Behan Gifford
Freelance Writer
Seattle, WA

Alex Kwanten
Freelance Writer
Seattle, WA

Benoit Fleury
Good Old Boat
Canada

New Supporting Members

Steve Tilders
Xylem - Makers of
Marine Pumps

Celeste Nixon Christie
Hurricane Hole Marina
Paradise Island,
Bahamas

Allison Reis
ElectroSea, LLC -
Descaling, electro-
chlorination & marine
growth prevention