



HONORING JIM RHODES: HEADING TOWARD UNCHARTED WATERS

by Brady Kay, BWI President

The first line of his biography acknowledging him as the founder and president of Rhodes Communications, Inc., a full-service public relations and marketing company serving international clients, does a good job of explaining what Jim Rhodes does for a living, but it clearly doesn't begin to measure his reach or his importance in the boating industry.

To marine journalists his name should ring a bell. After all, he's also the president of Marine NewsWire, a press release distribution wire service serving more than 1,500 commercial and recreation media outlets worldwide. Simply put, for decades Jim Rhodes has been keeping us all informed so we can do our jobs better. This doesn't even factor in all of the press conferences and other boat events he's organized over the years as his connection to marine writers is immeasurable. So, why am I choosing to highlight Rhodes in our newsletter this month? Because after an impressive career, Rhodes is heading into retirement this month and we're going to miss him.

Rhodes is ready for retirement and ironically this isn't even the first time the over-achiever has retired. After 30 plus years of active duty

and reserve service in the U.S. Navy, Rhodes retired as Master Chief Petty Officer, specializing in naval special warfare, combat boat operations, navigation, ship handling and training. His service to our country alone is worth a shout-out in the BWI newsletter, but it's his importance to all marine journalists as well as his connection to our organization that makes him worthy of a full tribute.

"For the record, I think I joined BWI the year Bob Black founded the group at a New York boat show," recalls Rhodes. "Not sure what year it was, probably about 35-40 years ago." Rhodes is remembered for co-chairing the committee that wrote BWI's first version of the Code of Ethics in the 1980s. He has served as a judge for our BWI writing contests since they were instituted; in fact, he helped get the contest started.

"I remember Joe Skorupa [the BWI president at the time] and I sat in a hotel bar in Chicago and sketched out the writing contest rules and judging criteria on the back of a cocktail napkin," adds Rhodes. His reach and importance to not only BWI but to the marine industry in general is truly remarkable and as the current BWI president I realize I'm here in due (in great measure)

to someone who has laid the foundation for us all. I knew my thoughts alone weren't enough to honor his legacy so I reached out to others who know him best and who shared their insights below.

Jim, thank you for your help and dedication, your leadership and your tireless efforts to improve the marine industry. On behalf of the BWI board, we wish you nothing but success on your next adventure.



Inside this issue:

Page 03
General News

Page 05
Member News

Page 06
Calendar of Events &
New Members

BWI HONORS JIM RHODES CONT.

"Jim Rhodes has always been a steadfast presence at BWI functions. He has been an essential contact for BWI news distribution as well as a great resource for legacy knowledge, which is so important to an organization that's more than 50 years old. Besides, he's always a smiling face who welcomes BWI press to industry events and he will be missed." - Zuzana Prochazka

"Over the last 40 years, I've had the distinct pleasure of working with Jim Rhodes on numerous assignments. Besides the fact that he is, and has always been, a thorough-going PR professional, he is also a steadfast personal friend. He and his wife Ann live in Norfolk, where he also manages Rhodes Communications for a global client list. Few of you may know that Jim is a versatile musician, and his home is crowded with musical instruments. Fewer still may know that he is a veteran of the U.S. Navy, a retired Master Chief and an instructor with armament training credentials on small tactical boats. But, if you have worked with Jim, all of you know what a genuinely good man he always is. Join me in wishing him a relaxing, fulfilling retirement."

- John Wooldridge

"Jim Rhodes is in the elite group of public relations communication professionals who appear to effortlessly provide more than the standard deliverables expected by writers, being available on short notice and in difficult scenarios and having a widespread knowledge of individuals' and outlets' needs and goals. He adds to his utility an approachable demeanor and honest interest in the people he works with and for. The material that gains Jim's muster delivers real news and passes the ethical smell tests, and he is asked for and provides input on these issues to many who have experienced his integrity."

Jim has been a regular volunteer and board member serving organizations related to boating, including BWI and we value his perspective, can-do attitude and ability to get projects done on time. When business is concluded, Jim often encourages impromptu R&R sessions, bringing newcomers along, and enjoying the camaraderie of many colleagues he has turned into true friends." - Greg Proteau



Jim Rhodes admires the very first Volvo-Penta Aquamatic sterndrive with John Wooldridge at a client event for Volvo-Penta.



Recent BWI retirees (from L to R) Michael Sciulla, Greg Proteau and Jim Rhodes at the 2020 Miami International Boat Show. Photo by Wanda Kenton Smith.

GENERAL NEWS

FIVE CREATIVE WRITING TIPS FOR KIDS (AND BOATING WRITERS)

*By Annalise Harter and Sam Haviland; Interlochen Arts Academy
Submitted with permission by Steve Davis*

In almost any household, you can find the materials you need to get started as a writer: paper, pencils, or maybe a computer. And yet, as anyone who has ever stared at a blank page or screen knows, I know it's hard to create something from nothing. The endless possibilities are both tantalizing and overwhelming, and self-criticism and unfair comparisons can discourage you from even trying.

While many schools offer classes to help students get started in other art forms, creative writing is often relegated to a few assignments in an English class. To help them get started, award-winning Interlochen Arts Academy creative writing students, Sam Haviland and Annalise Harter, share their experiences as beginning writers, where they find inspiration, and how they stay motivated.

Tip #1: You can do it.

Haviland: The great thing about writing is that anyone can be a writer. Writers are just people who like to share their thoughts and experiences, and everyone has their own thoughts and experiences. There are writers who like to write about music. There are also writers who really enjoy sharing about nature, robots, or basketball.

Tip #2: Read.

Haviland: Reading is the most important thing you can do to become a good writer. Writing without reading is like exercising without eating. You just can't do that. You have to feed your creative mind before you can put anything on the page. Of course, you don't want to write exactly what you have read. You need to make room for your own voice and creativity to grow.

Harter: Reading is huge as a writer because that's your inspiration. When I was younger, I read the Little House on the Prairie series by Laura Ingalls Wilder; the Chronicles of Narnia series by C.S. Lewis was another big one for me. My imagination was all about exploration and adventures, so I really liked reading books about children who were doing that kind of thing.

Tip #3: Don't be overly critical of your first works.

Haviland: One of the biggest challenges for writers is self-criticism. Sometimes you write something, and when you go back and read it again, you think it's really bad. That might make you feel like quitting and never trying again. When you're getting started, just write for yourself. Don't write for others or write to be a good writer. Write to find out how you want to write. And if you think it's bad? Don't worry. It will get better as you work on it, just like anything else.

Harter: It's normal to think your work isn't good or have anxiety about sharing it. That can be an obstacle for any writer, but especially for new writers. If you're having a difficult time getting started, sometimes having a routine helps. I like to make myself hot chocolate before I write, and that works for me.

Tip #4: Listen to feedback from people you trust.

Haviland: Feedback is really important. When you write something, you always see the big picture because the full idea is inside your head. Your story makes sense to you because you wrote it. But you don't know how someone else might see it. They might not make the same connections or understand it differently.

Story continued on next page...

Story continued from page 3...

In art, we talk a lot about intention. When you write something, you have certain intentions for how it will be received by the reader. Really understanding the effects your work had on someone and how they actually understood your words is important. Feedback gives you a chance to change your work to make sure it has the effect you wanted.

When you're ready to start sharing your work, start small. It doesn't need to be everything all at once. One of the things I like doing at the Arts Academy is trading work because then you're not just giving yourself over to another person and saying "Here is my work. Judge it." Instead, it becomes more of a joint effort: you're sharing and helping each other improve.

Harter: A lot of times, if I'm going to share a piece in a workshop, I start by showing it to my parents because I know they're supportive. In a workshop, we provide feedback to each other. Instead of focusing on critiquing someone else's piece, I like to write down my first impressions. That gives us a list of things we can talk about. Maybe the writer doesn't understand how their piece is working for the reader. Revision, for me, is a way of seeing how effective your writing can be. I don't see it as determining whether you are a good writer or a bad writer; it's about finding ways that you can improve.

Tip #5: Look for opportunities to share your work and grow.

Harter: Once you feel comfortable sharing and revising your work, look for other resources like competitions, which can help to keep you motivated. If you do well in competitions, it can give you a huge confidence boost. Creative writing clubs or classes can help give you some structure and introduce you to other young writers, which is really nice.

Sam Haviland, a senior, has received a number of accolades from the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards and has had her work published in the Interlochen Review, Interlochen Arts Academy's digital art and literature journal. Annalise Harter, a junior from North Carolina, focuses on fiction and nonfiction writing. Her work has been recognized at the regional level of the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.

Steve Davis is a BWI board member and the editor-in-chief of Southern Boating.

BWI/AIM JOURNALIST SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

By Robert Beringer

After careful consideration the BWI Scholarship Fund judges' panel determined that Jack Brackin, a junior majoring in media production at the University of Florida was the 2022 recipient of the BWI/AIM Boating Journalist Scholarship.

"This kid is a real water-dog, and one that's already made inroads in becoming a working member of the boating press," wrote one judge. "One glance at his experience and studies leaves no doubt that he deserves this scholarship, and the support of BWI." *Story cont. on page 5...*



Story continued from page 4...

Ty Nelson, Founder of Florida Fishing Products had the following to say about Jack: "Jack and I immediately began working together on product overviews, FFP "Guide Stories", and several smaller projects specifically for our Instagram. I was very impressed with his quality of work as he was only 17 years old when we began working together. He is one of the most dedicated and hardworking young men I have ever met... It is worth noting that Jack has managed to produce The Captains Log, help my company with videography work on the side, and attend the University of Florida full time all while maintaining what I would consider a very well-balanced social life."

And from Jack's career goal statement: "My passion for as long as I can remember has been the saltwater experience. At around the age of 14, I started filming, editing, and posting on Instagram (@jackb47). My equipment was my cell phone, and my software was the free Movie Maker that came on my computer.

"I hope to grow my company, Outside Chance Media, into a business that promotes outdoor life through advertising, educational outreach, TV, streaming platform shows, social media, and art photography. I want to continue to focus on the water-based experience, fishing and boating, while bringing on other content producers to assist in my focus and focus on different outdoor experiences such as hiking and camping.

"In the following year, I hope to increase my footprint by building my website and including a retail section for photography. In the next five years, my goal is to graduate and work full-time, build relationships in the boating and fishing industries and with other outdoor providers, working for them to promote their business and the lifestyle. I firmly believe in the rich and positive mental, physical and educational nature of being on the water. I first-hand understand that time on a boat of any size, floating in any depth serves a person well."

See some of jack's work at: <https://www.thecaptainslogtv.com/> <https://www.lateral-media.com/>

The \$3,000 award was presented at the annual BWI breakfast meeting at the Miami International Boat Show February 16, 2022. Thanks to our board members, and especially Active Interest Media for sponsoring the scholarship.

MEMBER NEWS

ADVERTISING OFFERED IN 2022-2023 BWI ANNUAL DIRECTORY

It's that time again when we will be creating the BWI Annual Directory which will be distributed this summer. And once again, BWI will be accepting advertising in a special section to highlight our Supporting Member businesses. The digital directory is distributed to all current Active, Associate and Supporting members. Prices have held at \$250 for a 4-color, full page ad in the front section. Please contact executive director, Zuzana Prochazka at info@bwi.org to place an ad or if you have questions.

NEW CLIENT FOR MARTIN FLORY GROUP

Glidecoat has hired Martin Flory Group. The PR firm will promote the company's line of high-performance ceramic surface protectants and related cleaning products for boats and RVs.

The logo for Glidecoat, featuring the word "GLIDECOAT" in a bold, red, sans-serif font. The letters are closely spaced and have a slight shadow effect.

IBEX INNOVATION AWARDS & A SEARCH FOR JUDGES

IBEX 2022 will be held at the Tampa Convention Center, Tampa, FL. The show dates are September 27 - 29, 2022. The 2022 IBEX Innovation Awards will be presented during the Industry Breakfast taking place on the opening morning of IBEX—Tuesday, September 27 at the JW Marriott Tampa Water Street Hotel.

If you're interested in applying to become a judge for this year's Innovation Awards, please contact Zuzana Prochazka at info@bwi.org.

BY THE NUMBERS

The National Marine Manufacturers Association released statistics on first-time boat buyers. In 2021, 420,000 novices joined boating by purchasing new or pre-owned vessels. This makes the second consecutive year that the numbers have topped 400,000 and it's the highest tally in the past 15 years.

Meanwhile, BoatUS has based their stats on their membership of over 800,000 boaters. The average length of their primary boat is 28-29 feet and their average years of experience is around 27. It would be interesting to learn how that number has decreased given the number of newbies now entering. Additionally, BoatUS states that 76% of their members boat for the day, 59% fish, 44% cruise overnight, 26% participate in watersports, 20% sail and 9% dive.

2022 ELEVATE SUMMIT

The event is slated for November 14-16 at the Caribe Royale resort in Orlando. Although in previous years, the event recognized retailers exclusively, this year's agenda includes the "Top 100", "40 Under 40" and "Women Making Waves" - all programs created and sponsored by Boating Industry Magazine.

Topics addressed will include tools to sustain a successful dealership including leadership insights, management/marketing techniques, customer experience strategies, and market and legislative updates. Networking will be highlighted.

BWI Officers

President
Brady Kay
blk@harrispublishing.com

1st Vice President
Kim Koditek ('23)
kkoditek@boatsetter.com

2nd Vice President
Ben Stein ('23)
ben.stein@panbo.com

Executive Director

Zuzana Prochazka
newbwiinfo@gmail.com

BWI Directors

Lenny Rudow ('22)
ultangler@gmail.com

Adam Quandt ('23)
Aquandt23@gmail.com

Steve Davis ('23)
steve@southernboating.com

Ron Ballanti ('24)
ron@strike-zone.net

Alan Jones ('24)
boatscribe@comcast.net

WELCOME

New Members

Chad French
San Diego, CA

Ross Duree
Fort Lauderdale, FL
(Duree & Co PR)

David Craig
Dorset, UK
(Saltwater
Communications PR)

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 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 manufacturers or marine organizations.