



WELL DESERVED RECOGNITION

by Brady Kay, BWI President

“When you're good at something, you'll tell everyone. When you're great at something, they'll tell you.” This is one of my favorite quotes that came from legendary running back Walter Payton, who retired as the all-time leading rusher in the NFL after playing football for 13 years for the Chicago Bears. It's a quote I pass on to the youth I coach when I feel they're getting a little too proud of their own accomplishments. I like the quote because it's basically saying to be humble and let other people recognize your talent and skills.

In a way I feel the BWI contest is the ultimate platform to give talented writers the recognition they deserve. Although many of them could rightfully boast of how great they are, they generally choose the more humble route.

Besides countless social media posts from our members announcing their winning entries following the BWI Breakfast, I also noticed writers getting some love in the print publications they represent. David Lyman received some recognition in Caribbean Compass for his second-place finish in the Boating Profiles category and I'm sure there were others that I just didn't catch in other publications.

It truly is a big deal to win an award, so I fully support publications sharing the award-winning news with their readers. The contest this year attracted 79 participants who submitted 267 entries across 15 categories. I know first-hand how hard it is to win since my only winning plaque from 2018 is getting very lonely on my office shelf.

In the most-recent issue of Soundings Trade Only, the publication proudly included in its Miami Boat Show recap feature a paragraph recognizing its talented group of writers who won. The Active Interest Media Marine Group, of which Soundings Trade Only is a part, took four first-place awards, five seconds, five thirds and nine certificates of merit in the BWI contest. Whoa, now that's a powerhouse of strong writers. There is even a photo in the article of the winning authors holding up their plaques.

I'm thrilled BWI offers this contest to recognize our talented members because it is important. When you're good at something, you'll tell everyone. When you're great at something, they'll tell you and I'd like to shout out to the winners to let them know we think you're great.

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SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

I've been told I'm as plugged in as an Amish toaster, but that seems a little harsh. I admit I don't embrace change well and let's just say I'm not at the front of the line when technology advances are being handed out. Every office has one and I'm clearly that guy.

There was a time when I was able to simply respond with, "Sorry, I don't do Facebook," but those days are long gone. I didn't want anything to do with social media when it first came on my radar, but when I realized it was a powerful tool and another way to promote the publications I'm responsible for, I had a change of heart.



Along the way I've made a few mistakes with my social posts that were easily avoidable if I had just known a little more or had a better idea of what I was doing. Here are some tips I've picked up that you might find useful if you're still dragging your heels a little on embracing social media.

Hashtags

Always use hashtags because if someone is on a search engine such as Google and searching for something it can actually pull up your social posts. You don't have to be on Facebook to have your post come up in a search. Also, I don't think people actually read hashtags so you can sneak in others to lure different audiences to expand your reach.

Engagement

Don't forget to frequently engage with your audience. Go back to your posts and comment, like or just respond in any way because it helps the algorithms. That way your followers know their comments and thoughts are getting read and that you're not just a robot putting out content but rather a legit human.

Keep Things Simple

For social media posts, the more in-depth and detailed you get, the more likely you're going to lose people. Just keep it simple.

Illustrations

Always post a photo or a video. Statistics show posts that include a video or at least a photo tend to get viewed and shared way more often than just a text-only post. Photos or videos is what catches people's attention way more often than just words.

Capture the Audience

Like a good lead for an article, your first sentence of a post is critical because in this era of short attention spans, they might not continue reading. I don't mean "click-bait" phrases because those are overused. Just get to the point of your post immediately and don't get too wordy while doing it.

Quality Over Quantity

For the record, consistency and quantity are two very different things. To do it right you should be posting on a regular and consistent basis but not if you don't have something worth posting. Followers would rather read something that connects or interests them less often than to get a daily post that has no substance at all.

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Know Your Audience

As an industry leader, you should understand what your audience is most captivated by and what is trending at the moment in your specific market.

Limit The Share

Sharing other people's posts is great, but don't solely rely on it for the majority of your content. Original content is still king but sometimes you come across really good posts that deserve to be shared. Just be sure to include original posts as you find the right balance.

Target Everyone

Remember when posting you're reaching more than just those who know the boating segment well. Don't forget new boaters or those who are just discovering your social page for the first time and may not have a deep understanding of boating yet. Make sure your thoughts aren't too directed to just seasoned skippers.

Not Always About You

Self-promoting is how to attract new followers, but too much will drive followers away. Try finding a balance between self-promotion and involvement of others around you. Nobody likes getting spammed with the same message over and over. Get people involved, get them excited with upcoming new things and build a community that doesn't just focus on you.

Brady Kay is BWI President, Executive Editor and Publisher of Pontoon and Deck Boat Magazine.

ADVERTISING OFFERED IN 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 and Supporting members. Prices are \$300 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 with questions.

REMINDER: BWI CONTEST CHANGES

A recap: There are two big changes coming for the BWI Annual Contest so keep them in mind when writing this year's articles:

1. The 2023 contest (and all subsequent ones) will open November 15 and close December 15. This moves the contest up two weeks from what it has been so don't miss out by waiting until the latter half of December to frantically enter as this will be a hard deadline like it always has been.
2. New contest category: Yamaha Watercraft has generously offered to sponsor a 16th category - "Women in Boating". This category will feature women who are actively involved in boating or programs designed to encourage participation and boat ownership by women.

BWI SHIRTS

Because you're a current member, we want to give you a free BWI T-shirt like the ones the board members were wearing in Miami. Thanks to the generosity of Techron Marine Fuel System Treatment from Chevron, all you have to pay is the shipping, which is \$5.75 (U.S. only). Just sign into your BWI account by going to www.bwi.org/memberDB/tshirt.php, select the T-shirt size you want and one will be mailed directly to you. It's really that simple and if you wear it to the BWI Annual Contest breakfast in Miami or the BWI Tech Breakfast in Fort Lauderdale, you'll be eligible for additional and exclusive prize drawings.

MEMBER NEWS

NMEA ANNOUNCES 2023 CONFERENCE DATES

The National Marine Electronics Association (NMEA) has announced that its 2023 Conference & Expo will be held at the Orlando Doubletree Hotel at Universal, September 18 - 22.



2023
NMEA
Marine Electronics
Conference
& Expo

The manufacturer product exposition portion of the event will be held September 19, 20 and 21 with expanded show hours from 10:30 AM to 6:30 PM Tuesday and Wednesday, and 10:30 AM to 1:30 PM on Thursday. The NMEA Product of Excellence Awards Banquet will take place on Thursday evening, September 21, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM.

SHADOW CASTER SIGNS MARTIN FLORY

Shadow-Caster, a leader in next-generation marine lighting controls, as well as underwater, exterior and interior LED lamps, has hired Martin Flory Group as its PR firm. The Gurnee, Illinois-based agency will promote Shadow-Caster's growing line of products and company news in the US and Canada.

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