



HELP US GROW & WE'LL HELP YOU EXTEND YOUR DUES

by Ben Stein, BWI President

I'm a relative newcomer to this industry. I joined the ranks of marine journalists and BWI in 2017 after a career in financial services technology. I'm not sure how two careers could be more different. But, I am sure that I've found my second career far more rewarding and enjoyable than my first. Plus, it comes with the bonus of hopefully not driving me into an early grave.

I am honored to have the opportunity to contribute to our industry by serving as BWI's president. I am humbled to follow Brady Kay and only hope I can live up to the lofty standard he set leading this organization. I'd also like to use this opportunity to thank Brady for the support he has provided during the transition.

As we are all aware, boating journalism, like journalism everywhere, is in a constant state of flux. We are all asked to do more with less and many of us feel that pressure daily. Through the leadership of BWI's president, board and executive director, the organization remains relatively healthy. But, we are also constantly aware of the challenge we have to maintain that health.

It felt like a gift that at Brady's last board meeting as president, he proposed a new program to help us grow our membership. This

program will benefit our current members and the organization overall. Simply put, if you help the organization grow, we will help with your membership dues.

Here are the specifics: For each new active member you refer to BWI, we will extend your membership by six months. For each supporting member you refer, we will extend your membership by 12 months. As a reminder, active members are marine journalists and supporting members are marine industry manufacturers, advertising firms, and PR agencies. Active member dues are \$70 a year and supporting member dues are \$250.

Active members receive many benefits with their members including: The BWI Journal, two entries to our annual writing contest, eligibility to judge NMMA innovation awards with expenses covered, regular communications and networking opportunities including FLIBS and MIBS breakfasts, and more.

Supporting members receive: Online company listing including logo, products and services offered, media contact and website, high priority for your news in the BWI Journal and on our website, and sponsorship and

networking opportunities.

I believe all of our jobs are easier with BWI advocating for us as a group. Our events in Miami and Fort Lauderdale provide an opportunity to sit down with our colleagues and representatives of the companies we cover. The stronger the attendance is at these events, the better they can become. So please, join us for breakfast at both of these shows. You can grab a meal, learn something about technology in Fort Lauderdale and maybe pick up your writing award in Miami. Plus, you have an opportunity to win some excellent raffle prizes.

As something of a newcomer, I have not had the opportunity to meet all of our membership. I hope to rectify that at future events. But, in the meantime, if BWI can help you, please don't hesitate to reach out. My email address is ben.stein@panbo.com.

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WRITING FOR VIDEO

In the early 2000s, well before YouTube even existed, Boating Magazine started experimenting with our first boat test videos. We'd film our cover boat (on tape!) during the helicopter photo shoot and read scripted highlights over the footage. Since I had a background in radio commercials, I was tasked with writing the scripts. Looking back, I felt like we were on the cutting edge, but the first video we produced ran for over eight minutes and was as captivating as a 1950's educational film. (Google "Let's Make A Sandwich.")

Fast forward to today, where we're all shooting dozens of videos to broadcast over the web and on mobile social media platforms. Here are a few things I've learned along the way that help when writing for video.

Brevity, Brevity, Brevity

Legend has it that's what Pat Summerall used to say to John Madden while announcing football games to keep him from going off the rails. It definitely applies to video scripts. Whether you're striving for a voice-over narrative or an on-camera interview or walkthrough, the less you say, the better.

For one, speaking in full sentences takes a ton of time. For example, it took me 18 seconds to read my own lede paragraph, but 42 seconds to speak it aloud. Almost no one watches web videos past the two-minute mark, so that intro alone would eat up almost half of a typical viewer's attention span. Also, a lot of things you would describe in print are self-evident on camera. You don't need to wax poetic about a boat's blue paint job with red boot stripe when you can see it in the video.

Avoid Descriptive Tripwires

A boat company's marketing manager may tell you the helm seat is an "ergonomic, hydrodynamic, hyperbaric seating apparatus," but on camera it makes more sense to just say "helm seat."

Be Conversational

Whether it's a narrative or on-camera interview or even a how-to video, people respond better to being in a conversation as opposed to being lectured to. Personally, when I'm on camera solo, I prefer to work from a list of talking points rather than a fully-formed script. It always helps to have an experienced videographer who can provide real-time feedback, like when a take sounds flat, stiff, or too didactic. To sing the praises of a colleague, fellow Boating editor Randy Vance is one of the best in the business at boat test videos because he approaches them like John Madden approached football games—he shares his expertise on camera like he's on the stool next to you at a bar.

Invert the Pyramid

Old newspaper hacks will know exactly what this means—it's the technique of writing a quick lede, crystalizing the purpose of the story in a nut graf, then frontloading the meat of the article at the top in case the bottom got cut for space. This works for video scripts too. Try to make your most important points at the beginning, so you can get them across before your viewers start doom scrolling.

Hope this helps. And if you think your video is running too long, you're right.

- **Pete McDonald is a new BWI board member and executive editor of Boating Magazine.**



GENERAL NEWS

NEW REFERRAL PROGRAM

As described by Ben above, BWI is introducing a new referral program. You help us grow and we'll extend your dues cycle in return. Here's how it works:

For each new Active member you refer and who becomes a BWI member, we will extend your membership by six months. For each Supporting member you refer and who signs up with BWI, we will extend your membership by 12 months. Active members are marine journalists and Supporting members are marine industry manufacturers, advertising firms, and PR agencies. Supporting members referring other Supporting members will have their dues extended by 6 months. Referring a previous Active member will also count so long as that member has been inactive at least 24 consecutive months. For questions, please contact Zuzana Prochazka at newbwiinfo@gmail.com.

BWI ANNUAL CONTEST 2023 WRAP

The winners of the 2023 BWI Annual Contest were announced at the BWI membership meeting and awards breakfast on February 14 in Miami. Thank you to our breakfast sponsor, Yamaha, who continues to support the writers in our industry. Also, a great big thanks to all the chairs and judges as well as our 16 contest sponsors who made it all possible.

We had 248 entries from 76 entrants and we awarded 26 Certificates of Merit. Details are in the press release which was distributed at MIBS and is up on BWI.org. Congratulations to all.

REMINDERS FOR BWI CONTEST 2024

If you missed it at MIBS, here are updates to the BWI annual contest:

1. The 2024 contest (and all subsequent ones) will open November 15 and close December 15.
2. All entrants will automatically be placed on a list to serve as judges in categories they have not entered.
3. Reading will commence on or around December 20, 2024 and will be completed by January 5, 2025

BWI NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

One open director seat has been filled by newcomer Pete McDonald who will serve a three-year term. The slate of officers now includes Brady Kay (immediate past president), Ben Stein (president), Adam Quandt (1st vice president) and Steve Davis (2nd vice president). Lenny Rudow, Alan Jones, Kim Koditek and Ron Ballanti continue to serve. Congratulations and thanks to all.

TRADER INTERACTIVE LOOKING FOR MANAGING EDITOR – FULL TIME

This is a collection of "trader sites" including [Boatline](#). They are looking for a full-time editor to manage blog copy. Focus is on SEO to draw eyes to the site page <https://www.traderinteractive.com/> and a link to the job description <https://www.traderinteractive.com/applynow/> (scroll down to Managing Editor/Boat). Contact is Dustin Collard. LinkedIn:<https://www.linkedin.com/in/dustin-collard-36b727126/>. Salary range is \$70,000+/-, benefits. Thanks to Charles Plueddeman for forwarding.

MEMBER NEWS

SUZUKI CLEANS UP

Suzuki Marine USA has unveiled a new national dealer program to help get boaters into fuel-efficient and clean Suzuki 4-stroke outboard technology while properly scrapping/recycling their old two-stroke motors. The program, named "4-4-2" (meaning 4-stroke for 2-stroke), was introduced at the 2024 Minneapolis Boat Show and will be rolled out nationally in Q1 2024.

The dealer must scrap/recycle the 2-stroke outboard engine, and the money the dealer receives from scrap will be donated to an environmental organization of the dealer's choice. Under the program, dealers can accept any brand or size of 2-stroke outboard, regardless of age or condition.

For more information, contact Ron Ballanti at ron@strike-zone.net.



THE AMERICAN BOAT & YACHT COUNCIL (ABYC) FREE SEMINAR

ABYC has unveiled the comprehensive agenda for its sixth Marine Law Symposium, scheduled for February 29, 2024. This event, available in-person in Annapolis or online, offers a hybrid participation format. Contact Sharon Aronson for complimentary registration for press. saronson@abycinc.org.



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WELCOME

New Members

Michael Cassidy
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Kasandra Barrow
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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. Send items to be considered for publication to newbwiinfo@gmail.com. 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. Supporting members are usually manufacturers or marine organizations.