



2025 IN REVIEW AND 2026 AHEAD

by Ben Stein, BWI President

As 2025 draws to a close, I think many in the industry are probably not sorry to see the year end. For our industry as a whole, 2025 hasn't been an easy year. We've seen the continued fallout of consolidation throughout marine journalism. Part of that fallout has been the loss of several publications. Likely, we all know colleagues who have been affected by those losses.

So, putting 2025 in the rearview mirror likely suits many of you just fine. As I look forward to 2026, I wonder what the future holds. I certainly hope 2026 will be kinder to our industry and our colleagues. Despite a somewhat tumultuous year, I am heartened by some of what I see for BWI going forward. Our membership remains steady and we continue to enjoy strong support from our industry partners. The writing contest, which draws to a close as I write this, is tracking for a similar number of entries as compared to prior years.

Although it's nearly impossible to predict the future, it's extremely likely that significant change will be a continuing theme throughout the new year. BWI will need to adapt to changes and shifting realities. We must do that together

and that's where all of you come in. The BWI board is composed of 9 volunteer members serving two-year terms. This year, three of the board seats are up for election. These seats are open to all Active members and I encourage you to get involved and give back to this organization that exists for, and because of, you.

BWI needs to be an active and involved part of the industry transition. We need an engaged, experienced, and committed board who can help us navigate an evolving future. So, if you've made it this far, I hope you'll consider running for the board. There is more on the process below. If you find yourself wondering if now is the time to join the board, allow me to place a vote firmly in the yes column. Our strength and resilience only increase with the fresh perspectives and energy that you and our board members, provide.

Happy
New Year!



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GENERAL NEWS

CANDIDATES SOUGHT FOR BWI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elections for BWI Directors will be held in mid-January 2026. Three seats (that carry a three-year term) are coming open. Active members may run for director spots. Duties include participation at two in-person director meetings per year (no expenses paid), usually held at Miami and Ft. Lauderdale boat shows, availability for as-needed conference calls (2-4 per year), committee work, and serving as a BWI Contest category chair. For more information, contact Zuzana Prochazka newbwiinfo@gmail.com.

Successful candidates for the BWI board usually have a depth of knowledge in the recreational marine industry and well-established relationships with marine journalists. The board is active with each member contributing time on specific projects and drawing on their experience within the industry.

Candidates need to provide a brief summary (150 words by January 5, 2026) of their qualifications and ideas to help BWI grow. Summaries are reviewed by the nominating committee which consists of the current President, Immediate Past President and Executive Director. A ballot will be available to the entire membership when voting opens in January.

WELCOME

New Members

SUPPORTING

Propspeed International

Marcus Hamilton/Lina Leks

ACTIVE

Dawn Anderson

Mukilteo, WA

Jack Beattie

Port Townsend, WA

Lauren Beck

Oakland Park, FL

Zenon Bilas

West Palm Beach, FL

David Conway

Garden City, NY

Ann Dermody

Alexandria, VA

Jordan Hanseen

Seattle, WA

Stephanie Hollyman

Sausalito, CA

Bill Klip

Key West, FL

Kevin Maher

Fort Lauderdale, FL

Frank Scavone

Hobe Sound, FL

John Torrelli

Bonsall, CA

Michael Vatalaro

Alexandria, VA

Chris Watson

Barrington, RI

Sam White

St. Petersburg, FL

Shanan Wolfe

Silver City, NM

BWI 33RD ANNUAL CONTEST NOW CLOSED

1. The 2025 contest opened November 15 and closed December 15
2. 16 of 16 categories qualified
3. Judges reviewing entries now
4. Prize giving at MIBS BWI Breakfast on February 11, 2025 @ 7:45, Room TBD

A big THANK YOU to our sponsors including Furuno USA, PropSpeed International and Raymarine-FLIR who join us this year!

Contest Categories & Our Wonderful Sponsors

- Boating Columns – by KVH Industries, Inc.
- Boating Lifestyles – by Discover Boating
- Boating Profiles – by Nautical Ventures
- Boating Travel or Destinations – by Dometic
- Boating Adventures – by Yamaha Marine
- Boating Photography – by Raymarine-FLIR
- Environmental Awareness & Education – by PropSpeed international
- Fishing – by Suzuki Motor Corporation
- Boating Issues, News and Analysis – by Mercury Marine
- The Business of Boating – by BRP
- Seamanship, Rescue & Safety – by Sea Tow Services International
- Boat Tests & Reviews – sponsored by Volvo Penta
- Gear, Electronics & Product Tests – by Furuno Marine Electronics
- Boat Projects, Renovations & Retrofits – by Boats Group
- Boating Videos – by Boat Owners Association of US
- Women in Boating – by Marine Business Unit/Yamaha Watercraft

BWI IS SOCIAL!

BWI has an expanded presence on social media. Be sure to give us a follow on Instagram @boating_writers_international, on Facebook at Boating Writers International and on LinkedIn @boating-writers-international.

Don't forget to tag us in your posts too, so we can share and repost your stuff. The more we're connected, the more we can keep the world informed about what's happening on the water. For questions, contact Pete McDonald at pete.mcdonald@firebrand.com.

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HAVE A
MAGICAL
HOLIDAY

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.