



EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE

by Steve Davis, BWI President

I recently read an article about the difficulties of telling America's story. The topic has come to light as we celebrate the nation's 250th birthday, but how to create a coherent piece about a nation that is built upon founding principles riddled over time with contradictions is quite a challenge. Yes, there are the facts, but which ones are included and the spin on them is defined by who tells the story. Even when writing about a new boat, or about maritime history, or new gear, or a destination, what the writer sees is how the story is told.

I think most of us shine our stories with a positive light to provide readers with a feel-good attitude about boating, but are we misleading them by not including some of the uncomfortable realities, such as the rattling of a hardtop in chop? It's important to be honest and try not to glorify beyond reasonable logic, clearly separating fact from opinion and examining uncomfortable truths instead of avoiding them. Oh, and staying away from AI writing the story for you.

As a writer, building trust is key. In turn, it's also important for publications because the audience

is looking to trust what they read is honest and true. BWI's Ethic Policy 2.1 states, in part, "Writers and editors must never deliberately mislead readers, either by making dishonest or distorted statements or by omitting pertinent facts about a product or subject they are covering..." It's a challenge for both writers and editors, but we "should always strive to be fair and truthful."

Gaining trust as a writer can open new opportunities, including those you might feel are out of your realm, and two BWI members have successfully taken the leap of faith to do so. Chris Dixon has tackled topics that range from primeval South Carolina landscapes to his latest contribution in National Geographic's "Wonders of America" feature celebrating the 250th anniversary. Former BWI president Kim Kavin has taken her freelance work from volcanic mountain peaks to below the ocean's surface but has gone where few of us have—testifying before the U.S. Congress. She was awarded the 2025 "Defender of Worker Freedom" award by the Institute for the American Worker for empowering the rights of independent contractors.

Honesty in your writing
builds trust in your skills.

Congratulations to both.

As the U.S. celebrates its 250th anniversary, BWI celebrates editorial independence as it's "the best way to achieve honesty and excellence in our work."

Inside this issue:

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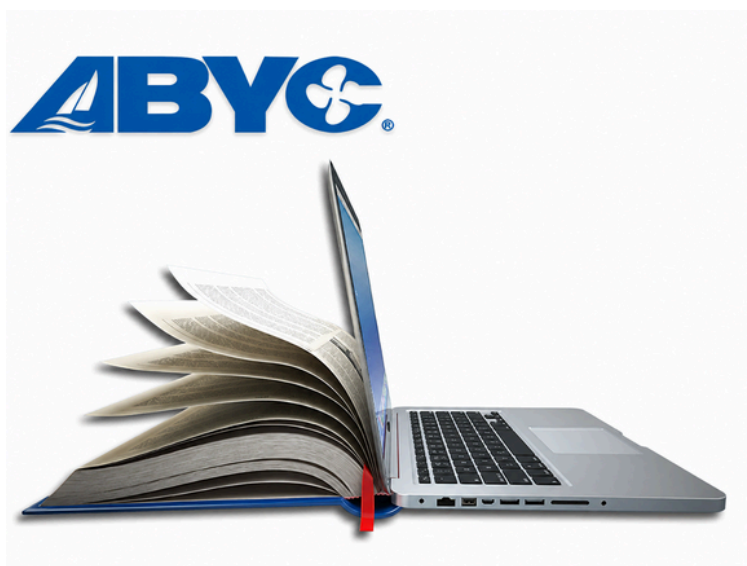
Writer's Tip

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Update your BWI info before
the new directory!

USING EXPERT RESOURCES

Early in my career, my editor assigned me an article covering the pros and cons of bulbous bows, forcing me at the time to do something most people don't like to do, admit I knew nothing about the subject. Prior to that, I'm not sure I'd ever heard the term "bulbous bow," let alone thought about how one applied to recreational boats. Once I admitted that I knew nothing, my editor gave me a few helpful suggestions for starting, including the phone numbers to a few well-known



naval architects. And that launched a deep dive into the subject, to the point where I could competently put pen to paper (and, I might add, win a BWI award for the final work.)

With all the recent technological advancements in recreational boating, it's fairly easy these days to step aboard a new boat or attend a press conference for some insane gadget and realize you're out of your depth, which makes leaning on expert sources all the more important. Fortunately, we are surrounded by people who are more than happy to educate us on numerous topics. I was reminded of this in June, when the American Boat and Yacht Council (ABYC) hosted a free webinar for the media that both encouraged and explained how to tap into the organization's resources.

For those that don't know, ABYC is the organization that sets the technical standards that boat builders in the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) follow. If you need an expert source for anything from electrical systems to fuel systems to nav lights or autonomous piloting systems and so much more, they have experts on hand who can help. BWI promoted the ABYC webinar beforehand, but if you didn't get the opportunity to attend, you can watch it here: [Expert Technical Writing Starts with the Standards Webinar](#).

ABYC's main media contact, Shannon Aronson, hosted the webinar. If you're looking for a starting point for a technical article, you can contact her at saronson@abycinc.org and she will point you in the right direction and help you locate an expert source. (Her official title is Senior Director, ABYC Marketing and Communications.)

So if you take it upon yourself, or are asked, to write an article about, say, battery installation and maintenance, starting with someone who wrote the ABYC standard is likely to yield far better results than just Googling it or, gasp, asking ChatGPT. ABYC also offers membership opportunities for media members that includes a whole host of archives and references on boating standards.

For more information, go to ABYCinc.org.

BWI board member, Pete McDonald

GENERAL NEWS

UPDATE YOUR BWI INFO: AUGUST 10 IS THE LAST DAY!

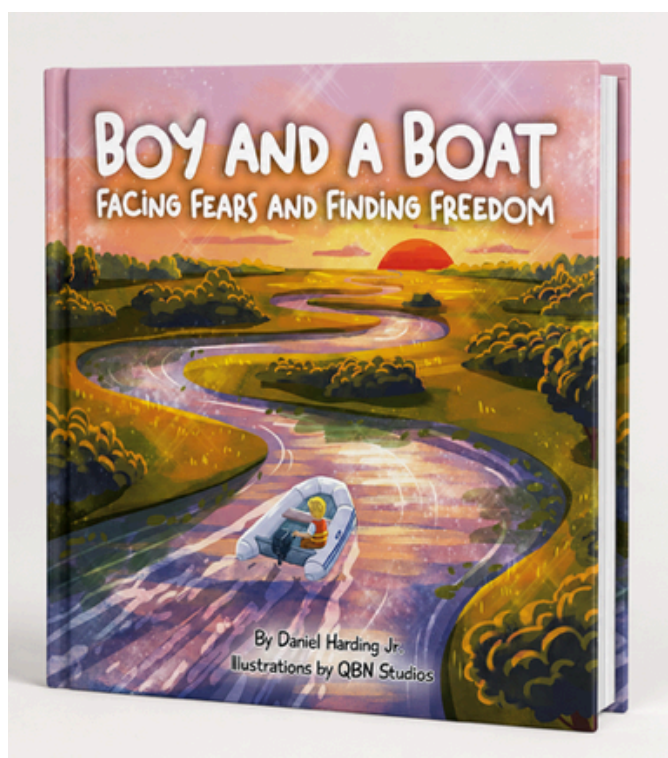
As you'll see below, we're putting together the annual BWI Directory which will come out in August. If your contact information or employment status has changed, now is the time to update. In fact – August 10 is the last day. This applies to individual Active members as well as corporate Supporting members. Just log in on BWI.org and get a code that you then put back into the same box you had put your email. Check SPAM if you don't receive a code immediately. Please contact Executive Director, Zuzana Prochazka at info@bwi.org with questions.

LAST CALL FOR ADVERTISING IN 2026-2027 BWI ANNUAL DIRECTORY

We're putting together 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. Price is \$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.

HARDING PUBLISHES CHILDREN'S BOOK

Power & Motoryacht Editor-in-Chief Dan Harding recently published his first children's book, *Boy and a Boat*. Written with real boaters in mind, the story follows a young boy who is both excited and scared as he ventures out onto the water solo for the first time. Harding hopes that, in some small way, the book will encourage young boaters to get excited about our shared pastime. *Boy and a Boat* is available now on Amazon.



GENERAL NEWS CONTINUED

BWI IS SOCIAL!



BWI has an expanded presence on social media. Submit your show photos and 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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