



HERE YOU COME AGAIN

by Steve Davis, BWI President

In a nod to Dolly Parton, I couldn't help but sing the line, "Here you come again..." It's that time of year when I go through what seems to be the never-ending cycle of boat show season. Not that it's a bad thing, but I think back to a J-24 sailboat in San Francisco Bay when I was racing named "Just Another White Boat." The shows may feel like the same ole' thing, but I must admit I do enjoy the excitement of perusing shiny new boats, checking out the latest in technology, and seeing all the new gear I'd like to have but don't really need. It is a good way to see everything in one place, but best of all, it's seeing the friends I've made over the years. Even if it's once a year, there's a comradery that endures.

Not all boat shows have full BWI member attendance, but there's always a chance to run into one or two colleagues. What I'd love to see is most of you down at the Fort Lauderdale or Miami International boat shows. As two of the biggest shows in the U.S., they are where BWI hosts its two biggest events, the annual technology breakfast at FLIBS and the annual contest awards at MIBS.

Now it's time to start thinking about your work this year for entry

into the 2026 BWI Contest. Don't forget, as a member you get two free entries and have the opportunity to win up to \$500 in each of 15 categories (only \$30 for each additional entry). It's well worth the membership dues alone. I'd like to reiterate the fact that BWI is a volunteer association, and the contest relies on our members to participate as contest judges, so please help make this an equitable one for all our entrants.

The BWI Technology Breakfast is quickly growing in popularity and it's a morning event before the show opens. Attendees hear personalized presentations from the breakfast sponsors on their latest tech and a one-one-opportunity to discuss what's ahead. Oh, and the raffle prizes are outstanding and your odds of winning are awesome.

Another benefit of BWI membership is the annual directory, which is now available. Whether looking for a writer, contacting one for a reference, or proposing topics and ideas to the editors, this a great resource. Read more about the contest, technology breakfast, and directory in the General News section of this newsletter.

Boat show season has begun and I take Dolly's last words in the song to heart. "Here you come again, and here I go."

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SUBMITTING YOUR WORK

In September's newsletter last year, I expressed the importance of making sure your entry into the annual BWI contest is submitted correctly to avoid being omitted from judging. As I mentioned then, and is still the same now, (because there were a few who forgot), the "obscuring rule" is the number one culprit. Be sure to obscure the byline, author, author image, and name of publication including any mention made within the article text or captions. Full details on the [BWI Contest](#).



Whether submitting entries for the BWI Contest or submitting stories for publication, adherence to submission guidelines is extremely important. Most professional publications provide their guidelines online, but for new writers, it's important to reach out to the magazine's editorial department first.

"Because we get so many AI-written press releases and pitches, it's important that a first-time pitcher send an introductory email that reads like a human wrote it—and that shows they've actually read and understand our brand," advises Dan Harding, editor-in-chief of Power & Motoryacht. "It's discouraging when a talented writer reaches out and then starts pitching kayaking or fly-fishing stories for a power yacht magazine. That's often a red flag and an immediate deal breaker for me."

As a former editor-in-chief, I've received similar submissions from people who obviously didn't do their research, including those from marketing firms. I mean, really, how long does it take to look up the publication to understand their focus and audience? It's also a good idea to read a few of the stories to get an idea of the magazine's style and tone. Read the Editor's Letter to gain insight into the editor's voice and personality. Even social media sites can offer an awareness of what's popular.

"I'm always on the lookout for fresh voices and stories to bring into Power & Motoryacht," adds Harding. "What I need most from contributing writers is constantly changing and evolving with the seasons. There are some months when I find myself in need of contributors to write boat reviews. Then there are other seasons when I need a story that focuses on someone using a boat in an interesting way, or perhaps, a boatbuilder profile. Because what I need is always changing, the best contributors reach out and start a conversation about what we need."

That's where that initial email plays in. Use the word pitch in the subject line along with a clear working title. After your greeting and introductory sentence stating you'd like to share a story idea, establish your topic with a paragraph or two describing the type of story and why it would be a good fit. Follow with a quick summary of your credentials and experience (include a link to a posted story if available) and then sign off with an appreciative ending.

"Most editors I know need more than boat reviews. We are all looking for those stories that get owners excited about the boating lifestyle, nautical culture and traditions, and saltwater adventure," says Jeanne Craig, editor-in-chief of Yachting. "These pieces are fun to write too. Note, they also require good photos, so keep that in mind when you pitch. If you have ideas on how/where to source strong art, include that info in the pitch."

Give your email about a week to 10 days before sending a polite follow-up, and remember, it may not happen on your first try, so don't give up. - Steve Davis, BWI President

GENERAL NEWS

THE 2026-2027 DIRECTORY IS OUT

All members should have received an email with link to the 2026-2027 BWI Annual Directory. Use the revised one. This is reference material for all members in good standing and it's an exclusive benefit so please don't share this information. Thanks to all ad sponsors/advertisers – we are always grateful for your continued support: **Best4Boats, BoatUS, Duree & Company, Dometic, Formula, Iosso Products, Kicker Audio, Seatow International, Suzuki Marine USA, and Yamaha.**

FIFTH ANNUAL BWI TECHNOLOGY BREAKFAST AT FLIBS 2026

If you missed it last year, you're going to want to put it on your schedule for next month. The Fifth Annual BWI Technology Breakfast at FLIBS will be held at 8:00 on Thursday, October 29 aboard the South Beach Lady which will be located on the Face Dock inside the FLIBS show.

Come upstairs to airconditioned comfort and a free and fancy breakfast. Learn about great new technology from our sponsors which in the past have included **Seakeeper, Avikus, Garmin, Navico and Raymarine.**



We will be done before the show opens – promise. Don't be late and bring some business cards for our amazing raffle because YOU'LL NEVER HAVE BETTER ODDS OF WINNING!

BWI 34TH ANNUAL CONTEST OPENS NOVEMBER 15 AND CLOSES DECEMBER 15



The contest recognizes exceptional creativity in boating journalism, photography and videography. Entries are being accepted in 15 categories which translates to \$15,000 available in prize awards. Note that this year, Business of Boating is combined with Boating News and Analysis to create a united and robust category called Business of Boating and Consumer News & Issues.

Only BWI Active members are eligible to enter. As a member, you get two free entries. Additional entries are \$30 apiece.

Entries in all categories are welcome in a digital-only format -- including blogs and on-line videos, or traditional print sources. Redaction is necessary for all but the video category. Category definitions and sponsors are detailed in the [2025 contest brochure](#). An update is coming.

The contest recognizes the best marine writing and imaging and the awards are presented in person at the Miami International Boat Show during the BWI Annual Meeting in February.

PLEASE – contact Steve Davis (steve@southernboating.com) to volunteer to judge. We need 45 judges in addition to our 15 chairs.

Contest Categories & Our Wonderful Sponsors From 2025

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

DON'T FORGET TO POST THROUGHOUT THE BOAT SHOW SEASON

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.

And 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.

BWI Officers

President
Steve Davis ('28)
sdsails@stevedavis.media

1st Vice President
Pete McDonald
pete.mcdonald@firecrown.com

2nd Vice President
Kelsey Bonham Bailey ('28)
kbonham@geico.com

Ben Stein - Immediate Past Pres.
ben.stein@panbo.com

BWI Directors

Ron Ballanti ('28)
ron@strike-zone.net

Alan Jones ('29)
boatscribe@comcast.net

Michael Longman ('29)
mlongman96@yahoo.com

Arnie Hammerman ('29)
arnieh@best4boats.com

Executive Director
Zuzana Prochazka
newbwiinfo@gmail.com

WELCOME

New Members

ACTIVE
Ryan McVinney
Eastham, MA

Nicole Jacques
Belfast, ME

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