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For Further Information, Contact:
Amy Riemer, Media Relations Representative
978-475-4441 (office)
978-502-4895 (cell)
amy@riemercommunications.com

**THE IBEX INNOVATION AWARDS PROGRAM IS NOW OPEN TO ALL EXHIBITORS:
ESTEEMED PANEL OF AWARD JUDGES ANNOUNCED**

BROOKLIN, ME, July 23, 2015 –The International BoatBuilders' Exhibition and Conference (IBEX) Innovation Awards acknowledge the importance of innovative new products in the marine industry. All IBEX 2015 exhibitors are welcome to enter their new products in the competition, which are judged by a panel of industry experts from Boating Writers International. This is one of the marine industry's most prestigious honors, and winners will be announced during the Annual Industry Breakfast on Tuesday, September 15th from 7:30 – 9:30 a.m. at the Kentucky Exposition Center.

The awards honor achievement in product development in 13 areas of the marine industry, including boatbuilding methods and materials, inboard and outboard engines, hardware, interior parts and furnishings, OEM electronics, boatyard and dealer hardware and software, and safety equipment. Judges may also present an award to any entry that provides an environmental benefit to the marine industry. Entrants will enjoy increased exposure, special recognition, heightened promotions, improved press at IBEX, and beyond. Products entered in the Innovation Awards program are displayed all three days of the show on Innovation Way, located inside the IBEX exhibit hall. The deadline to enter submissions for the Innovation Awards is August 12, 2015. [Click here](#) for more information.

“The IBEX Innovation Awards are an opportunity to showcase our industry's ongoing product development while recognizing individual companies for their leadership in building innovative products,” said Thom Dammrich, President, NMMA. “We are privileged to work with Boating Writers International and its highly qualified panel of judges, who help make the Innovation Awards one of the most prestigious awards in the marine industry and shine a light on the importance of innovation to the continued success of our industry.”

The panel of BWI judges for the 2015 IBEX Innovation Awards includes:

- **Alan Wendt**, Lead Judge, is President of Boating Writers International, a writer for *Lakeland Boating* and marine industry marketing consultant.
- **Zuzana Prochazka**, Co-Chair, is a freelance writer and photographer with regular contributions to over a dozen sail and power boating magazines and online publications, and has been a nine-year member of the board of Boating Writers International.
- **Roger Marshall** has written eighteen books (one a best seller), and hundreds of magazine articles, and is a former chair of the Innovations Award committee and a former member of the DAME awards committee for the METS show, as well as past president of BWI.

- **Roger McAfee** contributes regularly, on a freelance basis, to *Pacific Yachting*, *Sea Magazine*, *Lakeland Boating*, *Southern Boating* and, occasionally, to *ShowBoats International*. He is the chair of the judging panel for Pacific Yachting's "Best In Show" awards at the Vancouver International Boat Show."
- **John Page Williams**, Senior Naturalist for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, reviews powerboats and writes about fishing, natural history and environmental issues for *BOATING & Chesapeake Bay Magazines*.
- **Mike Vatalaro** serves as executive editor of *BoatU.S. Magazine*, focusing on new products, fishing, and video production. He spends most of his spare time on the waters of the Chesapeake Bay with his family aboard their 24-foot center console.
- **Gary Reich** is the previous editor at *PropTalk Magazine* and the managing editor of *Waterway Guide*. His writing and photography have been published in *PassageMaker Magazine*, *Soundings*, *Yachting Magazine*, *Chesapeake Bay Magazine*, and *Lakeland Boating*, among others.

"BWI has put together an exceptional panel of technical marine experts, and the judges are excited to review the new products and unique solutions that always rise to the surface at IBEX," said Alan Wendt, Lead Judge and President of Boating Writers International.

In addition to the IBEX Innovation Awards presentation at the Industry Breakfast, renowned baseball catcher Johnny Bench will present a motivational speech on the value of success, as well as the State of the Industry Address, delivered by Thom Dammrich, NMMA President. There will also be the presentation of the NMMA Hall of Fame Award, the Boat US Life Jacket Design Competition Winner, the *Boating Industry Movers & Shakers Award*, the Mel Barr Award presented by the National Marine Representatives Association (NMRA), and the NMMA CSI Awards. To register for IBEX and the Industry Breakfast, [Click here](#).

About IBEX: Owned and produced by *Professional BoatBuilder* magazine and the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), IBEX is the marine industry's largest technical trade event. For boatbuilders, marine industry dealers, aftermarket suppliers and buyers, designers, repairers, surveyors, and boatyard/marine operators, IBEX is where better boats begin. For the latest information, visit www.ibexshow.com.

About *Professional BoatBuilder* magazine: *Professional BoatBuilder*, a boatbuilding-industry trade magazine, was first published in 1989 in response to a growing need for a dedicated forum for boatbuilding-related professionals. The magazine's worldwide readership exceeds 24,000. *Professional BoatBuilder* is online at www.proboat.com.

About NMMA: The National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) is the leading association for the North American recreational boating industry. NMMA member companies produce more than 80 percent of the boats, engines, trailers, accessories and gear used by boaters in North America. The association is dedicated to industry growth through programs in public policy advocacy, market statistics and research, product quality assurance and promotion of the boating lifestyle. Learn more at www.nmma.org.

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