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**2017 IBEX INNOVATION AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED HONORING ACHIEVEMENT IN PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT FOR THE MARINE INDUSTRY**

**TAMPA, FL, September 19, 2017** – This morning the winners of the 2017 Innovation Awards were announced during the annual Industry Breakfast at [the International BoatBuilders' Exhibition & Conference \(IBEX\)](#). The Innovation Awards honored achievement in product development in 10 areas of the marine industry. Winners were selected by a panel of judges from Boating Writers International (BWI), a professional organization consisting of writers, editors, publishers, photographers, broadcasters, and communications professionals associated with the boating industry.

“These awards signify the importance that innovation plays in our industry, and IBEX is honored to recognize these key innovators and their products that keep the boating industry at the forefront of cutting edge trends,” said Anne Dunbar, IBEX show director. ““With more than 95 product entries, competition was tight and the winners chosen from our top-tier panel of BWI judges represent the best the industry has to offer, all of which can be viewed along Innovation Way in aisle 100 throughout the Show.”

“This year the entries reflected many of the changing consumer trends and expectations of today’s boating lifestyle. Competition reached new levels, and many product innovations were designed for easier user interface,” said Alan Wendt, Chair of the Innovation Awards and Past President of Boating Writers International.

The 2017 IBEX Innovation Award winners are:

- **Boatbuilding Methods & Materials:** CEproof Group, ICOMIA Technical File Generator
- **Deck Equipment & Hardware:** Aluna Systems, Light Pole;  
Honorable Mention: SUREFAS B.V., CAF-COMPO screw-stud
- **Mechanical Systems:** Seakeeper, Seakeeper 3
- **Electrical Systems:** JL Marine Systems, Power-Pole CHARGE
- **Outboard Engines:** *Dual Winners:* Suzuki Motor of America Inc., DF350A; Yamaha Motor Corporation, F25C
- **Boatyard and Dealer Hardware and Software:** Gemeco Marine Accessories, TDT1000 Transducer Diagnostic Tester
- **Propulsion Parts, Propellers:** BRP US Inc., Evinrude iDock;  
Honorable Mention: PowerTech! Propellers, CushionLok2
- **OEM Electronics:** *Dual Winners:* JL Marine Systems, Power-Pole VISION; Lumitec, Power Line Instruction Technology
- **Trailers, Parts and Trailer Accessories:** Gatorbak LLC, Premium Clear Bunk Covers
- **Safety Equipment:** Vesper Marine, deckWatch App

The panel of judges for the 2017 Innovation Awards includes:

- **Alan Wendt (Chair):** Past President of Boating Writers International and contributing writer for Lakeland Boating & Southern Boating, Yacht Rendezvous Event Planner for Manufacturer based customer cruises.
- **Zuzana Prochaska (Co-Chair):** Writer and photographer who freelances for over a dozen boating and travel magazines. A USCG 100 Ton Master, Prochaska is the founder of Zescapes.com, a charter and flotilla organizer. She has served on the board of Boating Writers International for the past 12 years and heads up judging panels evaluating new boats and gear in the U.S. and abroad.
- **Charlie Levine:** Editor and publisher of *FishTrack.com* and *Buoyweather.com*, which provides weather, fishing charts and a database of articles for offshore anglers and mariners. Levine has worked as a journalist in the recreational marine industry for 18 years and is Second Vice President of Boating Writers International.
- **Brady Kay:** Executive editor of *Pontoon & Deck Boat*, *Houseboat* and *Great Lakes Boating* magazines and has served as an Innovation Award Judge on a couple of occasions. Kay recently earned a 2017 Grand Award from Apex Awards and has been a member of Boating Writers International for nearly 20 years.
- **Craig Ritchie:** Ritchie began his career writing consumer boat tests and industry trade content in the late 1980s as the assistant editor at *Boat Guide* and *Boating Business* magazines, which serve the Canadian market. Almost three decades later, Ritchie still contributes to both of them – along with trade titles like *Boating Industry*, *Boating Industry Canada*, *Marine Business* (Australia) and *International Boat Industry* (worldwide).
- **Nigel Calder:** Author of the 'Boatowner's Mechanical and Electrical Manual', 'Marine Diesel Engines', 'Cuba: A Cruising Guide', and several other titles. Calder is a technical contributor and editor for various boating magazines; a member of the ABYC's 'Electrical PTC'; and a researcher into high efficiency energy systems for boats.
- **Ben Ellison:** Editor of *Panbo*, The Marine Electronics Hub – Ellison has been a sailor, power boater, do-it-yourselfer and apparently incurable boat nut since the early 70's. This fall, he will again cruise and test his way south from Maine aboard an elaborately equipped Duffy 37 named *Gizmo*.
- **Melissa Wood:** Former associate editor for *Professional BoatBuilder* magazine and an editor for national trade magazines covering commercial fishing and seafood. Based in Portland, Maine, Wood is also a freelance writer primarily focused on issues affecting coastal communities.

#### **About the International BoatBuilders' Exhibition & Conference (IBEX)**

**IBEX**, Where Better Boats Begin ([www.ibexshow.com](http://www.ibexshow.com)), is the marine industry's largest technical trade event in North America and is powered globally by **METSTRADE**, the world's leading platform and community for professionals in the leisure marine equipment industry. IBEX is owned and produced by the **National Marine Manufacturers Association** ([www.nmma.org](http://www.nmma.org)) and **RAI Amsterdam** ([www.rai.nl](http://www.rai.nl)). The 2017 IBEX is scheduled to take place at the Tampa Convention Center, September 19 – 21, in Tampa, FL USA. For more information, please visit [www.ibexshow.com](http://www.ibexshow.com).

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