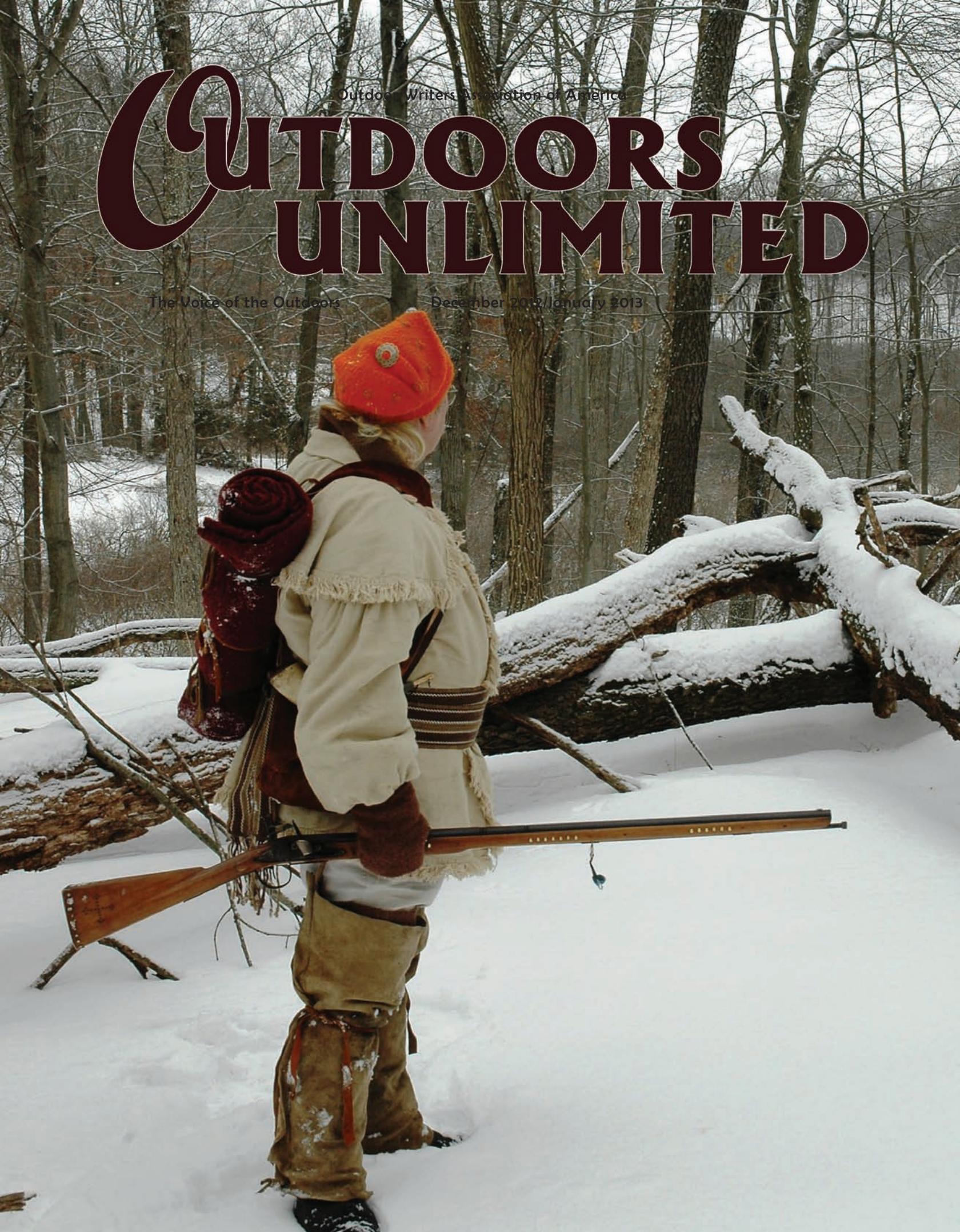


Outdoor Writers Association of America

# OUTDOORS UNLIMITED

The Voice of the Outdoors

December 2012/January 2013

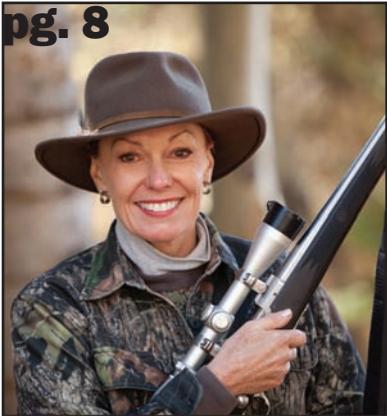




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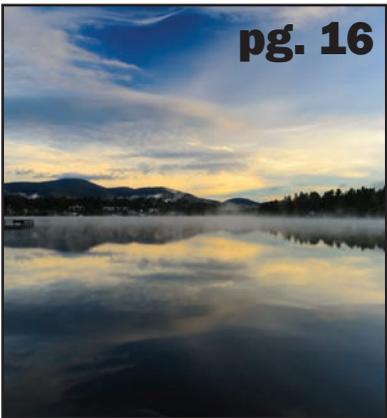
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## ON THE COVER

By Dennis Neely

With a flintlock smooth-bore in hand, and a bedroll slung over his shoulder, a traditional woodsman gazes west on a pleasant winter morning in Michigan, wondering what awaits beyond the next ridge. Read more about traditional black powder hunting at [www.traditionalblackpowderhunting.com](http://www.traditionalblackpowderhunting.com).

## OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Our mission: improve the professional skills of our members, set the highest ethical and communications standards, encourage public enjoyment and conservation of natural resources and mentor the next generation of professional outdoor communicators.

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# New Year, New Editor

**B**y the time you are reading this it will almost be time to start a new year. The new year is a time of fresh starts and beginnings, so it's fitting my first issue as editor of *Outdoors Unlimited* will take you out of 2013 and into 2014.

I'll be spending the start of my new year immersing myself into OWAA, learning about its mission and history and how to put out a publication that is relevant to members. As a working outdoor journalist myself, I've already benefited from being a part of the organization by putting together this issue of OU. **Mary Linkevich's** craft improvement article on social media reminded me to think beyond the obvious Facebook and Twitter and consider how other outlets can help me find, pitch and report more effectively. Since first reading **Tim Flanigan's** article on an easy tip to improve your wildlife photography, the images I take with my point and shoot camera have already improved.

Putting together the portfolio for this issue exhibits not only what talented photographers we have in the organization, but also the enthusiasm and appreciation members have for being outside. I understand why people are already gearing up and talking about our next conference in May. You'll find

dates to pencil into your calendar if you are already planning on attending, and if you haven't yet committed to coming to conference you'll read about why you should. One of those enticements is our keynote speaker Andrew Samson, a leading Texas conservationist.

I'm excited to be a part of an organization where so many people share my two passions — journalism and the outdoors. I grew up in Montana and have always loved being outside, hiking, biking, shooting and climbing. I attended the University of Missouri to study journalism with a focus on outdoor reporting. It was in college when I first heard about OWAA thanks to several members of the Missouri Outdoor Communicators. I've spent most of the past decade in Wyoming at newspapers. Most recently I've worked as a freelancer, specializing in outdoor and environmental reporting. I'm always looking for a reason to go skiing and call it work. And I'll be still trying to get away with that — when I'm not putting together *Outdoors Unlimited*.

It's a new year, new beginnings, but some things never change. ■

— *Publications Editor*  
Kelsey Dayton  
editor@owaa.org

## OWAA offers financial assistance

### ■ MADSON FELLOWSHIP

Active or Associate OWAA members are invited to apply for the 2014 John Madson Fellowship.

Applications must be sent to the OWAA headquarters, postmarked no later than March 1, 2014.

Since its inception in 1994, the John Madson Fellowship has provided OWAA members with more than \$12,000 in funding to continue their education in the outdoors communication field. It can provide funding for individuals to participate in OWAA programs, such as the annual conference, as well as outside continuing education opportunities.

The Fellowship is funded through the John Madson Fellowship Fund, an endowment that thrives primarily through OWAA member contributions and fundraising efforts. Its goal is to enhance professional communication skills for all of OWAA's members.

For more information about the John Madson Fellowship, visit [www.owaa.org/programs/scholarships-fellowships/madson-fellowship](http://www.owaa.org/programs/scholarships-fellowships/madson-fellowship).

### ■ BODIE MCDOWELL SCHOLARSHIP

OWAA is accepting applications for its Bodie McDowell scholarship program. Scholarships are for the 2014-15 academic year.

Applications must be sent to the OWAA headquarters, postmarked no later than March 1, 2014.

Established in 1966, more than \$119,000 in scholarships have been awarded since 2002. Approximately \$22,000 in scholarships will be awarded in 2014. Each scholarship includes a one-year student membership with OWAA.

The Bodie McDowell scholarship program is open to college students who are undergraduates in their junior or senior year of study or are pursuing graduate degrees, in all communications and journalism disciplines and from all schools.

Applications for the 2014 award are now available. For more information about the scholarship, visit [www.owaa.org/programs/scholarships-fellowships/bodie-mcdowell-scholarship](http://www.owaa.org/programs/scholarships-fellowships/bodie-mcdowell-scholarship).

## Jumping Into a New Year

OWAA ski jumped into a new year at Lake Placid. I greatly enjoyed seeing the 1932 and 1980 Winter Olympic sites in our conference visit to the Adirondacks region of New York. The Miracle on Ice hockey arena down the hall from our conference meeting rooms was way cool. Now, we look ahead to fishing, birding and outdoor romping in the Gulf of Mexico region for our May 23-25 conference hosted by McAllen, Texas.

Several things make me feel OWAA is headed upward and in for a good landing at McAllen.

New faces appeared among our membership ranks at Lake Placid. Whether they were young folks starting careers or veteran communicators, they were enthusiastic and brought fresh energy. They spoke well of sessions attended and the encouragement offered by experienced members. Today's first-timer is tomorrow's leader.

For many of us, it was our first visit to gorgeous upstate New York. Thanks to New York for the welcome. Here's hoping members of the New York outdoor writing community that shared a conference with us will also join us in Texas.

We all get a lift from being among kindred spirits for a few days. I was especially gratified to see members of the Pennsylvania delegation. They conjured memories of my first conference in Harrisburg, Pa., and of so many conferences after. I saw **Bob Clark** — I bought his turkey hunting book at a conference silent auction long ago. **Terry Brady**, tackling committee duties this year, brought thoughts of current chores on my to-do list.

Saying howdy to **Kermit Henning**, who recently finished a term on the endowment trustees, reminded me of how much volunteers make OWAA prosper. Thank you Keystone-state folks.

The OWAA Executive Committee meeting prior to conference start was one of the most communicative and fruitful that I've attended. Board meetings went well. Our thanks extended to **Mark**



**BILL GRAHAM**

**Taylor** of Virginia, outgoing president, who did a great job running meetings and tackling issues that arose during his term in office.

The current OWAA board is creative and communicative. OWAA faces issues, including building membership and improving our brand's national recognition. The organization will address those. In fact, at the second board meeting, members added an ad hoc Member Relations Committee chaired by **Colleen Minuk-Sperry**, and a Supporter Liaison Committee headed up by **Lisa Densmore**. Our Executive Director **Tom Sadler** and headquarters staff will be ramping up outreach to new members and supporters this year, but we'll also reach inward to make sure we're taking care of those already on board.

All our OWAA committees are up and running, including Membership, Marketing and Development. Densmore has the Conference Planning Committee for McAllen ahead of schedule.

We do have challenges, such as adapting to a journalism and marketing world that is fragmented and rapidly changing. But we have young leadership on the board and in the committees leading us forward. We have glitches sometimes — not everything runs perfect at a conference and it rarely has. But the board is listening to suggestions and will address improvements where we can.

OWAA is a big tent organization with all manner of outdoor communicators representing a wide variety of viewpoints, preferences and experiences. We offer connections and services to supporting groups, agencies and businesses that are diverse in mission. We might not always agree on the politics tied to conservation management, priority uses for natural resources or even what conference programming best serves members' needs, but we will remain an interesting place for those who enjoy a cutting-edge vantage point for outdoor communicators.

Here's hoping everyone gets off to a fine start in 2014, and please pencil McAllen into your late-spring calendar. ■

— OWAA President Bill Graham  
plattefalls@centurylink.net

### Up to \$15,000 up for grabs in 2014 contests

With 10 contests and 48 categories, you're sure to win in the OWAA 2014 Excellence in Craft contests.

Avoid the entry fee increase and submit your entries by Jan. 6, 2014.\*

Contests include:

- Television/Video/ Webcast
- Radio/Podcast
- Magazine/E-zine
- Newspaper/Website
- Blog
- Column

- Book/E-book
- Children's story in a newspaper, magazine or Web product
- Illustration/Graphic
- Photography

To enter the contests, go to [www.owaa.org/eic](http://www.owaa.org/eic). Rules and entry forms are available online.

The contests will continue with the digital online entry system first instituted in 2011. For entries submitted this way, the entry fee will remain as it

has been for the past few years, at \$10 per submission. For those who choose to send in their entries via postal mail (for example, magazine clips instead of PDFs submitted online), the fee will be \$20 per entry. This higher fee excludes books, CDs and DVDs. The fee increase covers admin costs for digitizing paper entries.

*\*The receive-by deadline for the Book/E-book contest entries at OWAA headquarters was Dec. 2, 2013.*

# OWAA Continues to Grow

In the eight plus months I have served as executive director of OWAA, people ask me two things over and over. “What does OWAA do?” and “What do you do?”

Of course the first one is easy, even if we all answer a little differently. In our strategic plan we present our core values like this: OWAA is the premier national association of professional outdoor communicators who learn, network, engage their peers, find business opportunities and mentor the next generation of outdoors communicators.

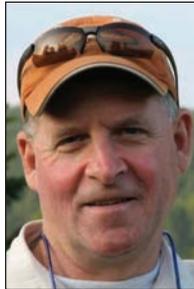
That core values statement is my “elevator pitch” response.

When answering the second question my response goes something like this; “I work to get more members, more money, more often.”

Here are some of operational things I reported to the membership at our conference in Lake Placid, N.Y., that make that happen.

The organization is currently holding its own financially. In discussions with the treasurer about assessing the bottom line, it appears we’re in approximately the same shape financially as we were at this time last year. We have made some expense adjustments and continue to review expenses in search of additional efficiencies to keep costs down.

The key to our financial security rests predominantly in the revenue side of our operations. We can’t “cut” our way to financial security; we need to “grow” our way there. Your membership recruitment efforts and referrals are essential to our continued growth



TOM SADLER

and are most appreciated in 2013.

How did we stack-up to the goals in our strategic plan? As of this report we know we will exceed our recruiting goals for supporting groups. We are on track to by the end of the year grow supporters by 9.5 percent bringing our number of supporters to 173. Our growth in individual membership is still not where we want it. Our goal for 2013 was to grow by 1 percent. Currently we have 824 members; we need 874 to reach that goal. We will get close but may not make it. Some of this is because of the demographics of the membership and the state of the communications business.

We had very good attendance at our annual conference with 108 members registered (that is 13.5 percent of membership and our goal was 15 percent.) We had 47 supporting groups registered (that is 25 percent of our supporting groups and our goal was 20 percent). Total attendance was 268. Conference always provides our members and supporters great educational and networking opportunities. That generally translates into more financial opportunities.

In the end, OWAA is a reflection of our membership. We are a close knit community of professionals who cherish the outdoors. Our work helps people understand and enjoy the great outdoors.

The opportunity to be part of the leadership team at OWAA is exciting, challenging and a career highlight for me. Thank you for giving me this honor and privilege and the chance to work with you as we guide OWAA forward into the future.

It’s great work, isn’t it? ■

— OWAA Executive Director Tom Sadler  
tsadler@owaa.org

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### TOMPKINS DESERVES AWARD

It is satisfying to finally see one of the toughest, most dogged, courageous, obstinate defenders of the Texas outdoors get his just recognition. **Michael Furtman** got it right when he said, “... he covers natural resources like no one else in the state, and few in the nation.” I know there were times when upper level state conservation and environmental officials were uncomfortable with Shannon’s

blunt reporting — reporting that stemmed from his boots on the ground approach to journalism.

I have been aware of **Shannon Tompkin’s** dedication to the truth in the outdoors for more than thirty years. My appreciation to the Circle of Chiefs, and congratulations to my friend, Shannon Tompkins.

— Sam Caldwell, Kingwood, Texas

### Feedback guidelines

Members are encouraged to write about issues and topics. The executive director and editor will decide whether opinions are appropriate for debate or if the comments promote a personal cause; if the “cause” is unrelated to OWAA’s mission and potentially damaging to the membership, the letter might not be printed. Word limit: 400. Longer letters will be returned for revision. Send letters to editor@owaa.org.

## BOARD AND MEMBERSHIP MEETING UPDATES

A report on the board and membership meetings held September 2013 at Lake Placid will be available at OU online at <http://owaa.org/ou/2013/12/fall-2013-board-membership-meetings>.

# The Eyes Have It

## A Simple Rule Transforms Images

BY TIM FLANIGAN

**W**ant to shoot great wildlife photographs all the time? It can be done by strict adherence to one hard and fast rule: “The eyes have it.” Photography is all about the eyes; specifically the eyes of the subject.

Eyes are much more than the windows to the soul, so much so that the manner in which they are rendered in a photograph or painting is of the greatest importance to the quality of the work. Your photography will immediately improve if you always focus your attention — and your lens — on the eye of the subject and nothing else.

To produce high-quality images of living things, from elk to mayflies, you must capture at least one of the subject’s eyes in sharp focus and it must contain a catchlight or highlight. These small telltale reflections of the photo’s light source give life to the subject and image. Flat dark eyes without a catchlight appear dead, and cause the viewer’s eye to lose interest in the entire subject.

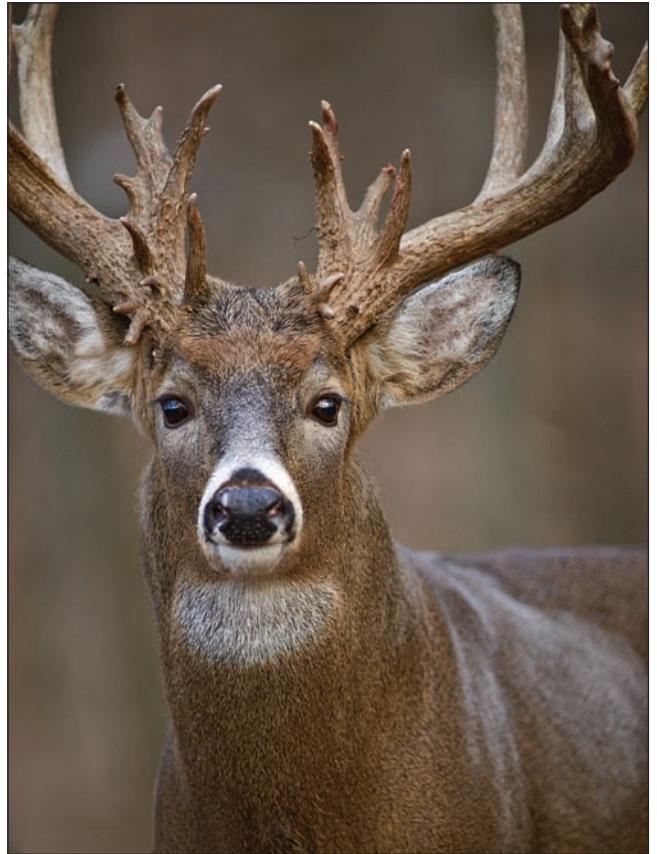
No matter what focusing mechanism or method you use in your photography, the camera and your eye must constantly focus on the subject’s eyes and you must trip the shutter only at the moment the eye is completely in focus and a catchlight flashes on its surface. Forget about the rest of the subject and shoot it in the eyes. This rule always — always, always — applies no matter how large or small the subject, or how narrow the depth of field. Shoot the elk or buck in the eyes and let the rest of the subject be rendered as it may. We can, of course, influence the depth of field by selecting various f-stops (lens aperture sizes), but even the narrowest band of sharp focus will produce great wildlife photos if the eye is located within the sharpest portion of the photo.

We’ve all heard about the deer hunter who focused on the antlers of the buck-of-a-

lifetime and missed the shot. This same division of attention afflicts photographers and we must force ourselves to observe the scene within the viewfinder with divided vision. What is that? Divided vision is the ability to observe and monitor the overall composition of the scene, while keeping the subject’s eye in constant focus by your eye and the camera lens. No matter how the subject is oriented to the camera, or how long or broad the subject may be, if the eye is captured properly, you have a presentable photo.

Not only must you commit to focusing on the eyes, you must also select the proper eye to focus on. With animals such as deer, elk, moose and most birds, we often see only one eye at a time. But with owls, bears and humans, which have eyes located on the same plane and are observed simultaneously, it is vitally important to focus on the eye closest to the camera. A slight turn of the subject’s head can shift one eye a few millimeters farther from your lens and slightly out of the focal plane. Keep your attention and the focus sensor upon the nearest eye. Focusing on the more distant eye renders the closer eye in soft focus, imparting a bleary-eyed look to the subject.

Most of us are now using auto-focus cameras and lenses, and although auto-focus capability is a wonderful aid, it must be applied with precise purpose to render a living thing’s eyes as sharp as possible. Nearly all modern high-end digital and film cameras feature focus sensors that can be selected at the will of the photographer. Even so, the location of the sensor in the view finder



Focusing on the eyes when you are photographing wildlife is the key to high-quality images. **Photo by Tim Flanigan.**

frame rarely falls directly on the subject’s eye as you compose the overall scene. Simply place the focus sensor on the eye and depress the shutter release until it snaps into sharp focus. Maintain that focus setting with steady pressure on the shutter release, move the lens to the desired composition and trip the shutter.

We must also remember that the eye’s surface is highly reflective and often produces mirror images that may include the photographer and the area behind him or her. This is especially true with close-up photography. I once saw a full page photograph of the head of a great-horned

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

# Get Social Media Savvy

BY MARY LINKEVICH

If you're a 40-something-or-older like me, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by the world of social media. But at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, where I manage communications and grants, our hikers, hawk watchers and other visitors look to social media for information about us. That means learning the ropes is a necessity.

I spent countless hours scouring the 'net for best practices in using LinkedIn, Facebook and Pinterest. Each platform requires a unique approach and yields different results. Here's a little of what I've learned:

## LinkedIn

For organizations like Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, LinkedIn is at the bottom of the list because I'm not actively seeking professional relationships and my ability to hire freelancers is slim to none (darn that budget). Think of this as an online resume and professional networking forum, a place to shamelessly tout any and all accomplishments. For writers, this is an ideal place to search and "link up" with editors, and there are numerous private groups you can subscribe to, such as LinkEds and Writers.

- If you're marketing skills or a product, then set up a profile. Be as complete as possible and keep it current. When you complete a project, post it as an accomplishment.

- Link up with businesses or professionals with whom you wish to build a relationship.

- Ask appropriate people to "rate" your skills. Reciprocate with your own "thank-you" rating.

- Post job openings. It's worth having a profile set up just for this, so it's ready when you are looking for new employees.

- Find me at [Mary Linkevich](http://www.linkedin.com/in/marylinkevich) or [Hawk Mountain Sanctuary](http://www.linkedin.com/company/HawkMountainSanctuary).

## Facebook

At Hawk Mountain, Facebook is second only to our website, and I spend the most of my carefully-managed time here. Birders turn to our page for weather and flight conditions. Our Facebook page links to Twitter, so our followers are updated at both sites.

- If you don't have a profile, then set up an account today. Consider creating both personal and professional accounts.

- Add additional administrators to help update the page for your business.

- Post links back to your website, but post infrequently to avoid inundating your followers with information to the point they are annoyed.

- Use Facebook "insights" to help tweak your approach.

- Keep it professional. Avoid personal posts, but do share articles relevant to your organization.

- Post information about your organization on your personal page, too, to reach more people.

- Find me at [www.facebook.com/mary.linkevich](http://www.facebook.com/mary.linkevich) or at [www.facebook.com/HawkMountainSanctuary](http://www.facebook.com/HawkMountainSanctuary).

## Pinterest

Think of this as an online bulletin board. Pinterest continues to be female dominated, but if attracting this audience is important to your business, then jump in.

- Establish yourself as an expert on topics that support your brand and create boards in your area of expertise. Include content you or your organization has produced, but also material from credible sources your customers will enjoy. At Hawk Mountain, our female customers are savvy, conservation-minded outdoors women, so my boards include Learning Outdoors, Nature Crafts, Mountain Wear, Campfire Cooking, and Great Reads (including Hawk Mountain publications and that of our partners), as well as Raptors in Flight and The Sanctuary.

- Create a business account using an email different from your personal address, even if you have to set up a new gmail account just for this purpose.

- Find me at [www.pinterest.com/marysue72](http://www.pinterest.com/marysue72) or at [www.pinterest.com/HawkMountainPa](http://www.pinterest.com/HawkMountainPa).

Of course there are more forms of social media, and each could run its own column. So here are a few best practices that can be applied to any platform.

- Focus on visuals and variety. Great images always get top response.

- Focus on quality over quantity. Look for "good" followers, not just all your personal friends who may not share your interests.

- Engage with other outdoor communicators and learn from watching what works and what doesn't.

- Don't forget to be human. It's really NOT all business, and to connect with new audience members, you do need to connect on a personal level.

- Don't be scared. Just jump in and test the waters when new outlets become available and then stick with what works; drop those that don't help you meet your goals.

- Model best practices and learn from those you think do a great job and you enjoy following. This isn't stealing, it's just smart. ■



Mary Linkevich is a full-time information, communications and grant manager for Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, a nonprofit outdoor nature center and research and training facility. You can contact her at [linkevich@hawkmountain.org](mailto:linkevich@hawkmountain.org).

## From business suit to camo: Marsha Sue evolves into avid outdoorswoman

BY PETER VAN HORN

When **Marsha Sue** married Al Sue 21 years ago, she promised they would stay open to each other's passions. He loved the outdoors. A Southern California executive, she had never been in a truck or worn jeans — she assumed they were only for farmers. As a wedding gift, the newlywed Marsha Sue received a shotgun.

Al and Marsha Sue met through a dating service. Neither of them had time for traditional dating, Al Sue said. He knew right away his future bride wasn't used to the outdoors, but with his help she became an avid hunter, angler and camper.

The couple delved into their respective interests and began to explore the world. Marsha Sue's former career in an executive financial position had involved looking at "broken" companies and deciding whether to fund them. After years of living in Los Angeles, she wasn't fully prepared for a new life immersed in the outdoors. Yet, she learned about hunting and fishing, activities that are now mainstays in her life.

"It's been one hell of a transition," her husband said.

After her career as an executive, Sue was tired of working for big organizations. She had developed communication skills during her years in finance, but she wanted to change topics. So she started working for herself, as a public speaker with a focus on leadership and personal development. Her speaking led her to take up writing as well. Her husband saw her talent as a communicator from day one.

"She is a bright lady, with an incredible ability to listen to people and pick up what they say and contribute to the conversation," he said.

Sue stayed open to her husband's passion. She embraced life as an outdoorswoman, hunting zebra in Africa and helping



Once a Southern California executive, **Marsha Sue** has become an avid outdoors enthusiast and communicator. Photo courtesy **Marsha Sue**.

her friends from California accessorize camouflage.

Trying new things outside of her comfort zone was important to her and something she constantly pursued.

"Doing the unexpected and challenging myself is something I have to do every day," she said.

She was doing just that- the challenging and unexpected- when she met Sandy Froman.

A lawyer, Froman is a former president of the **National Rifle Association** and has been an NRA board member for more than two decades. Sue met Froman in 2003, at Babes with Bullets, a women's-only firearms camp, where they hit it off immediately. After years of hunting and exploring together, Froman says Sue is, above all else, prepared.

"You could have an emergency break-

down with her and end up having a steak dinner with champagne," Froman said.

She recalled a hunting trip with Sue. They were hunting antelope; Froman had already tagged her animal and they were searching for another for Sue. On a small overlook, Froman watched as Sue, still holding her rifle safely, began to jump around and high step back from where she was standing. A rattlesnake had emerged from a crevice right in front of her.

"And it was a big snake too," Froman said.

No snakes or professional speakers were harmed, and the two women still joke about the trip as the time Froman learned that Sue could dance.

Froman got Sue involved in the NRA, and helped grow Sue's interest in guns and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

## WELCOME TO OWAA



Born in the heart of New York, **Bob Amendola** grew up in the South Bronx. He first developed his interest in writing at a school that Hollywood portrayed as the toughest school in the country in the movie, “The Blackboard Jungle.” Attending Pace University for a year, Amendola taught martial arts after receiving his second black belt, formed the Pace Athletic Club and edited the college newspaper. Serving in the U.S. Army as a Green Beret “A Team Member,” Amendola refused a medical discharge after being wounded in Vietnam and went on to teach STS members precision archery upon joining the U.S. Air Force. After leaving government service with two honorable discharges, Amendola settled in Southeast Missouri and just published his first book, “Today’s Deer Hunting Handbook, The Complete Illustrated Guide for New and Experienced Hunters,” and is currently working on his next book. Amendola is an archery expert, professional hunter, lecturer and writer and can be reached by his website, [www.bobamendola.com](http://www.bobamendola.com).



Writer and ecologist **Kirk Mantay** was born and raised near the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay in southeastern Virginia. An angler since age 5 and a hunter since age 17, Mantay relentlessly pursued greater knowledge and understanding of the American outdoors. He holds a master’s degree in environmental planning from Appalachian State University, and bachelor’s degrees in wildlife management and geography from Virginia Tech. Mantay wrote his first conservation press release as a wildlife technician in 1997, and writes regularly as a nonprofit conservation manager and college professor in Annapolis, Md. His outdoor-focused blog, “River Mud,” has been online since 2007, and features more than 600 posts on topics as diverse as waterfowl hunting, children in the outdoors, and urban gardening.



**Trampas Swanson** is originally from eastern North Carolina, where he served as a deputy sheriff and in a SWAT sniper unit. Swanson and his photographer wife Candace relocated to Jacksonville, Fla., in 2011, where he now works as a gunsmith, shooting instructor and writer, reviewing firearms, gear and ammo for magazines and websites. As a long-time hunter, like his father and grandfather, Trampas includes a lot of personal experiences in his writing, combining humor, history and family values. Being married to a chapter leader for The Well Armed Woman organization, Trampas spends a lot of his free time helping his wife educate and empower women in the shooting sports world through safety and marksmanship programs.



**Steve Zakur** lives and fishes in western Connecticut. Zakur writes about fly-fishing and related matters at [sippingemergers.com](http://sippingemergers.com) and in short-form on Twitter. You can also find his essays and short-fiction in The Drake, The Flyfish Journal and the upcoming volume of Pulp Fly. Zakur is a recovering trout snob, whose mind has been poisoned by steelhead, stripers and kvichak rainbows, not to mention largemouth, smallmouth and bluegills. When not fishing he’s usually writing about the people, places and sport of fishing. He’s the spouse of the lovely, intelligent, and tolerant Ann, the father of two above-average boys and an executive for a large technology company during his spare time.



**Rod Hamilton** was raised in Beaverton, Ore., where his passion for fly-fishing began at the age of 12. After graduating from Oregon State University with a bachelor of science degree, he moved to British Columbia in 1976, ultimately creating and operating companies nationally recognized in the financial services industry. “Retired,” he is now able to focus his energies traveling and writing about his obsession with catching bonefish, permit and tarpon on the fly. His love for fly-fishing has led to a website, various magazine articles and the soon to be published book, “Do It Yourself Bonefishing.” Residing in Vancouver for 30 years, he and his wife recently moved to Vancouver Island, British Columbia where the pace may be a little slower, but is significantly closer to fly-fishing’s summer quarry of trout, salmon and steelhead.

## New Members



Twenty years ago **Richard Minich** began a quest to catch the great musky. After accomplishing that goal, he still fishes and has interesting results — he recently caught a rare blue walleye. He has written three non-fiction books about musky fishing, available at [www.richardminich.com](http://www.richardminich.com). Switching to fiction, Minich created Joe Gaspe, a wild musky fisherman who knows everybody. He contracted Joe to the Department of Homeland Security. Chafing under the supervision of Radleigh Loonch, a young female intern, Joe and his eclectic network prevent bombings, rescue enslaved women, and save New York state in three novels: “Fireships and Brimstone,” “Girls Before Swine” and “Dread Upon the Waters.” Two newer books, “The Sollie Drake Story: Unsurpassed Among Men,” a fictional biography of the greatest musky guide in Wisconsin, and “Vengeance is Thine,” the fourth Joe Gaspe book, are featured in serial form on his website, [www.richardminichwriter.com](http://www.richardminichwriter.com).



**Bryce Bekar** was born and raised in Canada’s arctic. Bekard was born in Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories of Canada and raised in “The Polar Bear Capital of the World” — Churchill, Manitoba, which presented many opportunities for outdoor adventures that are sometimes beyond belief. Being a lifetime Northerner has given Bekar the freedom to hunt, fish and spend time in a place people pay tens of thousands of dollars to visit. Bekar started hunting when he was 5 years old and is raising his daughters with the same love of the outdoors. They enjoy most activities as a family in the Yukon now, and represent a dwindling breed of people that feel it is more important than ever to get our children involved with the outdoors.



After nearly 10 years in the world of Fortune 500 corporate America, a lifelong passion for wildlife conservation finally brought **Lynda Lambert** to the Arizona Game and Fish Department where she swears she could not have written a more perfect job description for herself. She serves as the public information officer responsible for promoting endangered species conservation, wildlife research, safe wildlife-human interactions and nearly all other public relations involving nongame wildlife species. Raised in Michigan, she has been writing about the great species of the Southwest since 2006. She has a bachelor’s degree in natural resource management and a master’s degree in risk communication from Michigan State University that comes in handy during her work with endangered species and negative wildlife-human encounters. Married to an avid fly-fisherman, she and her husband enjoy living the motto “get outdoors” with their two young children and are always searching for their next outdoor learning adventure.



**Judith Kohler** is the public lands communications manager for the **National Wildlife Federation** based in Boulder, Colo. She is also part of the communications team for Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development, a coalition led by National Wildlife Federation, **Trout Unlimited** and the **Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership**. Before joining the National Wildlife Federation in August 2011, Kohler was a reporter with The Associated Press for 21 years in Colorado and Wyoming, where she covered politics, energy and the environment. She wrote about the lead-up to the restoration of the gray wolf to the Northern Rockies; grazing reforms on public lands; the natural gas boom in western Colorado; sportsmen’s concerns about energy development; and the restoration of lynx to Colorado. Before that, she was a reporter and editor on weekly and daily newspapers in Colorado and Nebraska. The Deadwood, S.D., native earned a bachelor’s degree in journalism from the University of Colorado-Boulder.



**Marie Majarov**, a freelance photographer, writer and Virginia master naturalist, lives in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley on the edge of a historic woodland. There, she and her husband enjoy nature — especially gardening with native plants for butterflies and other pollinators, birding, hawk watching, and fishing when time permits. She’s passionate about lecturing and writing to increase awareness of the plight of the monarch butterfly, facilitated by her knowledge and appreciation of monarch biology and her in-depth photography of this majestic creature. Majarov studied with acclaimed photographers, biologists and naturalists **Rob** and **Ann Simpson**. Her features and photographs are seen regularly in Virginia Wildlife Magazine and have appeared in Zoogoer, a Smithsonian publication, BlueRidge Country, Hobby Farms’ Beekeeping, and various regional publications. Majarov is president of the Virginia Outdoor Writers Association and on the board of directors for the Mason Dixon Outdoor Writers Association.



**Whitney Clark** graduated from Virginia Tech in May 2013 with a degree in natural resource conservation and a minor in forestry. After graduation, she moved to Berkeley, Calif., to pursue a career in environmental resource conservation in the Bay Area. She loves exploring the natural world around her through traveling, hiking, camping and especially wildlife watching as she’s always enjoyed being around animals. One of her favorite things is sharing her excitement about the outdoors with those around her by telling stories of all her adventures. Besides that, she enjoys reading, fishing, gardening, walking dogs, and is an avid NFL football fan.



**Michael Hamilton** is as passionate about writing and voice acting as he is about fly-fishing. He's been doing all for more than 30 years. He frequently publishes in print and online for national and international fly-fishing, lifestyle and travel magazines. He is an active member of the Northwest Outdoor Writers Association. Prior to careers in freelance writing and voice acting, Hamilton spent 18 years in television and radio as reporter, anchor, editor, producer and news director. His career in broadcast took him from Vietnam to New York and back to Seattle. His awards include Associated Press and United Press International Reporter of the Year, and he is a three-time recipient of the prestigious Edward R. Murrow Award for Excellence in Broadcasting. Hamilton lives with his wife, public artist Pam Beyette, and his two cats, Cooper and Mini-Cooper, in Seattle. Please visit his website [www.troutdogs.com](http://www.troutdogs.com).



**Rick Fowler** taught English in a Northern Michigan high school for 34 years before retiring in 2012. He has been a freelance outdoor writer for the past 23 years. He is currently a field editor for Hooks and Bullets magazine and a Michigan editor for Midwest Outdoors. He is a regular contributor to Woods 'n Water, The Mackinaw Journal and The Good Life. He has won two Writer of the Year awards from Midwest Outdoors and a Michigan Outdoor Writers Association writing award from his peers. Fowler gleans numerous story ideas for articles on bird hunting and fishing at his residence in Northwest Michigan and his cottage on South Manistique Lake in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. He and his wife Sue are proud parents of two children who have also pursued educational careers.



**Eva Shockey** knows what it means to be part of the outdoor industry. Growing up with professional hunter and television personality **Jim Shockey** as her father, Eva Shockey was brought outdoors and in front of the camera at an early age. With a combined passion for conservation and adventure, Shockey is now a full-fledged Outdoor Channel and Wild TV personality and is quickly making a name for herself within the industry as a proud outdoors-woman. She spends more than 250 days per year traveling the world to co-host "Jim Shockey's Hunting Adventures," as well as representing the Outdoor Channel as host for various TV specials and red carpet events. Shockey is linked with various well-known outdoor brands like **Crosman**, Mossy Oak and HunterCourse, writes for various magazines and publications and makes guest appearances at trade shows and fundraisers across Canada and the USA. Shockey has found a way to balance hunting, travel and family into what she calls the "best lifestyle in the world."



Based in the Adirondack Mountains of northern New York, writer, photographer, and licensed guide **Ed Kanze** writes about the birds and the bees — which is to say he writes about nature, and the swirl of activity that makes the wild world go round. Kanze has published five books: "Notes From New Zealand," "The World of John Burroughs," "Wild Life," "Kangaroo Dreaming: An Australian Wildlife Odyssey," and "Over the Mountain and Home Again." His latest book, an Adirondack Mountain memoir interwoven with family history and natural history, will be published in 2014. Kanze's newspaper column, "All Things Natural," has been published weekly since 1987. He also writes a column for the Adirondack Explorer and is a contributing editor at Bird Watcher's Digest. Kanze has won the prestigious John Burroughs Association award for Outstanding Published Natural History Essay of 2004 and a gold medal at the International Regional Magazine Awards. Kanze is a former national park ranger and lives with his wife and two children.



**John Allen**, born and raised in south-central Pennsylvania, has been an outdoor writer and photographer since 2005. He has had a passion for the outdoors from a young age and has always enjoyed communicating it to anyone that would listen. He regularly appears in the Pennsylvania Angler & Boater magazine and Pennsylvania Outdoor News. His specialties are freshwater fishing, kayaking, white-tailed deer hunting and wild turkey hunting. Other interests include long-distance running, wild edible gathering, and vegetable gardening. He currently serves as the treasurer of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association. On a full-time basis, Allen is a certified public accountant with a regional accounting firm in south-central Pennsylvania. He resides in Carlisle, Pa., with his wife Maribeth and their dog, Remy.



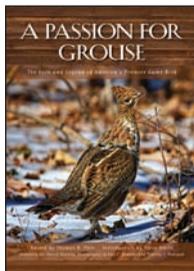
**Jessica McGlothlin** is a freelance photojournalist and writer. Montana is home but she is a wanderer at heart; her most recent adventure took her above the Arctic Circle on the Kola Peninsula in Russia for six weeks. After a summer of documentary work on Montana's Missouri River, she's now in the greater Puget Sound area while researching her next adventure. She has written for a selection of publications in the U.S. and abroad, including American Cowboy, Cowboys & Indians, Fly Fisherman, Fly Fusion, American Angler and The Big Sky Journal. She is on the team at Chi Wulff and grew up around the fly-fishing lifestyle. She is a member of the National Press Photographer's Association and Lightstalkers, and was recently invited to spend a week with the U.S. military for a journalism training program. McGlothlin is working on relocating overseas in pursuit of new subjects to photograph. While her goal in journalism is to cover conflict, the outdoor world has provided some unexpected — and fascinating — adventures.

## BOOKSHELF

### A Passion for Grouse

Edited by **Thomas R. Pero**, Wild River Press, 425-486-3638, P.O. Box 13360, Mill Creek, WA, 98082, Contact: Thomas Pero, [tom@wildriverpress.com](mailto:tom@wildriverpress.com), [wildriverpress.com](http://wildriverpress.com); hardcover, 560 pp.; \$100.

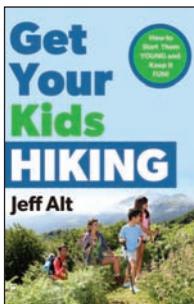
At more than 560 pages, “A Passion for Grouse” is not only the biggest book about hunting ruffed grouse ever published; it is also the most impressive in at least a generation. The book blends wildlife and hunting photography with contemporary writing, interviews with hunting legends and literary tributes to iconic grouse writers, plus dozens of favorite recipes for ruffed grouse from all the contributors. “A Passion for Grouse” is lavishly illustrated with hundreds of spectacular color photographs that bring the book to life.



### Get Your Kids Hiking: How to Start Them Young and Keep It Fun!

By **Jeff Alt**, Beaufort Books, 27 W. 20th St., Suite 1106, New York, N.Y., 10011; 212-727-0222, ext. 113, Contact: Cindy Peng, [cindy@midpointtrade.com](mailto:cindy@midpointtrade.com); [www.jeffalt.com](http://www.jeffalt.com); paperback, 240 pp.; \$13.95.

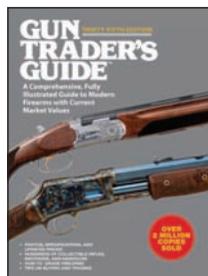
This comprehensive and fun guide shows parents how to get even the most reluctant child excited about outdoor exercise and exploration from a young age. The book includes everything you need to know to hit the trail with kids, from gear suggestions to safety techniques, to kid-friendly outdoor meal ideas. Jeff Alt is a hiking expert, accomplished writer and speaker, who is also the father of two enthusiastic young hikers.



### Gun Trader’s Guide, 35th Edition: A Comprehensive, Fully Illustrated Guide to Modern Firearms with Current Market Values

Edited by **Stephen D. Carpenter**, Skyhorse Publishing, 307 W. 36th St., 11th Floor, New York, N.Y., 10018; 212-643-6816, Contact: Oleg Lyubner, [olyubner@skyhorsepublishing.com](mailto:olyubner@skyhorsepublishing.com), [www.skyhorsepublishing.com](http://www.skyhorsepublishing.com); paperback and e-book, 597 pp.; \$29.95.

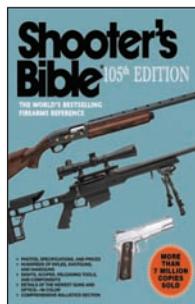
For more than half a century, this guide has served as the standard reference for gun collectors, curators, dealers and shooters. Included are extensive listings for handguns, shotguns and rifles from some of the most popular manufacturers, from Beretta to Colt to Winchester. This book offers the ultimate guide to purchasing classic or discontinued firearms, as well as for determining prices for any firearm you wish to sell or trade.



### Shooter’s Bible, 105th Edition

Edited by **Jay Cassell**, Skyhorse Publishing, 307 W. 36th St., 11th Floor, New York, N.Y., 10018; 212-643-6816, Contact: Oleg Lyubner, [olyubner@skyhorsepublishing.com](mailto:olyubner@skyhorsepublishing.com), [www.skyhorsepublishing.com](http://www.skyhorsepublishing.com); paperback and e-book, 600 pp.; \$29.95.

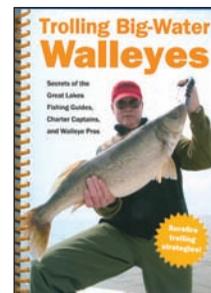
For nearly 90 years, the “Shooter’s Bible” has been the most comprehensive reference guide to firearms and their specifications. Covering every firearms manufacturer in the world, the 105th edition contains new and existing product sections on ammunition, optics and accessories, plus up-to-date handgun and rifle ballistics tables. This latest version includes coverage on the 50th anniversary of the Remington Model 110 and the 140th anniversary of the Winchester Model 1873.



### Trolling Big-Water Walleyes: Secrets of the Great Lakes Fishing Guides, Charter Captains and Walleye Pros

By **W.H. Chip Gross**, Kent State University Press, 118 Library, P.O. Box 5190, Kent, Ohio, 44242, Contact: Susan Cash, [scash@kent.edu](mailto:scash@kent.edu), [www.kentstateuniversitypress.com](http://www.kentstateuniversitypress.com); paperback, 128 pp.; \$29.25.

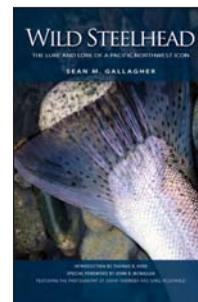
On big, open water like the Great Lakes, sprawling reservoirs, and large North American rivers, trolling puts more walleyes in the boat per hour than any other fishing method. Why? Because if done correctly, the lure or bait is always in the fish’s strike zone. In this detailed instructional guide, illustrated with more than 50 color photos and complemented by time-tested fish-catching secrets from experts, fishermen will learn to catch walleyes from those who chase this highly prized sport fish for a living.



### Wild Steelhead – The Lure and Lore of a Pacific Northwest Icon

By Sean M. Gallagher, Wild River Press, 425-486-3638, P.O. Box 13360, Mill Creek, WA, 98082, Contact: **Thomas Pero**, [tom@wildriverpress.com](mailto:tom@wildriverpress.com), [wildriverpress.com](http://wildriverpress.com); two volumes hardcover, 673 pp.; \$150.

During the 1960s, when Sean Gallagher — now a retired school teacher — was 16, his mother took him fishing for steelhead on the Skagit River in Washington. She hired a guide who, when the boat of a competing guide came around the bend, reached for a pistol and blasted it in the direction of the intruder. This, and other tales, are told in this two-volume slipcased set illustrated with more than 1,000 photographs.



# What do *You* want to do in Texas?

**BY MARTY MALIN**

**W**e are another calendar page closer to the 87th annual OWAA conference in McAllen, Texas and May 2014 is approaching quickly. The conference planning committee had its first meeting and I now find myself working with a couple of legal pages full of scribbled notes. Things are buzzing around here like a tote sack full of rattlesnakes.

While the committee is working on potential speakers and newsmakers, I am concentrating my efforts on pre- and post-conference opportunities for attendees.

In reviewing past pre- and post-conference opportunities we find that there are frequently more trips than trip-takers. With that fact in mind I propose the following. Aside from fishing and photography opportunities, I would like to hear from you regarding your outdoor related activities of interest. What would you like to do when you visit the Lone Star State? To get you started thinking about your dream trip, here are a few suggestions.

With the Gulf of Mexico on one side and the Laguna Madre on the other and South Padre Island an hour's drive away, there will be plenty of opportunities for salt water fishing, beach combing and site seeing. Let me know if you are interested in a three- or four-person off-shore Blue Water fishing experience at a reduced rate. We also might be able to arrange a three- or four-person day-long fly-in trip to an offshore oil rig.

Every year wildlife photographers from around the world flock to the area to capture images of rare bird species and other wildlife such as whitetail deer, feral hogs, javelin, coyote, badger and other varmints, that frequent the Rio Grande Valley. Our own **Tom Ulrich** and **Jim Foster** have spent months at a time on area ranches practicing their trade. Many of these ranches have built enclosed blinds near water holes specifically for the observation of those things wild and free. You can bird watch — and photograph — at these ranches during pre- and post- conference trips.

Other possible day trips include visiting wind farms, wildlife refuges, the Sea Life Center in Port Isabel and the South Padre Island Birding and Nature center. A trip to this part of Texas is not complete without a day-long adventure on the King Ranch which can be arranged through the McAllen Convention and Visitor's Bureau. The King Ranch was one of the most famous ranches in the United States and at one time spanned almost 1 million acres with land in four counties. It is still a working cattle ranch and farm, as well as home to hunting opportunities, a museum, a working saddle shop and exotic animals.

Hunting in the area in May is limited to exotics, which includes feral hogs. A \$48 five-day special hunting license is required for non-residents.



There will be much to see in Texas — including feral hogs. Photo courtesy Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Prior to my introduction to the National Butterfly Center in nearby Mission, Texas, everything I knew about butterflies could have been written on a matchbook cover. The acreage is planted with native vegetation to attract butterflies and after two visits at the center I think I have seen them all — Swallowtails, Whites and Yellows, Metalmarks, Brushfoots, Skippers, and lest I forget, Gossamer-wings.

Being close to the Gulf Coast, McAllen is full of hidden treasures. In addition to sporting clays, 5-stand, trap, and a pistol range, the Lozano Shooting Range, our host for shooting day, offers long range shooting out to 1,000 yards. Quinta Mazatlan, McAllen's wing-of-the-world birding center is a site to behold and that is just what we are going to do. This 1930's historic adobe home and grounds is a real gem and we will be there for the opening night's festivities.

There are so many unique opportunities in Texas, the challenge is picking out what to pursue. Let me know what would make this a trip-of-a-lifetime for you, and if there is enough interest I will do whatever I can to make it happen. ■



A former OWAA board member and president, and an award-winning television producer, writer and photographer, Marty Malin is local chair of the 2014 OWAA conference that will take place May 23-25 in McAllen, Texas. Contact him at [mmalin@stx.rr.com](mailto:mmalin@stx.rr.com) or at 956-717-1377.

# Meet the Conference Keynote Speaker:

## Andrew Sansom

BY LISA DENSMORE

With only eight months between the conclusion of the 2013 OWAA conference in Lake Placid, N.Y., and the start of the 2014 conference in McAllen, Texas, the Conference Planning Committee is already well into developing a can't-miss program for OWAA members, beginning with the confirmation of the conference's keynote speaker, Andrew Sansom, Ph.D.

Sansom is one of Texas' foremost conservationists. A native of the Lone Star State, he is the executive director of The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment and the Environment and Research Professor of Geography at Texas State University-San Marcos. According to the center's website, under Sansom's leadership, The Meadows Center, a research institute, develops and promotes "programs and techniques for ensuring sustainable water resources for human needs, ecosystem health and economic development."

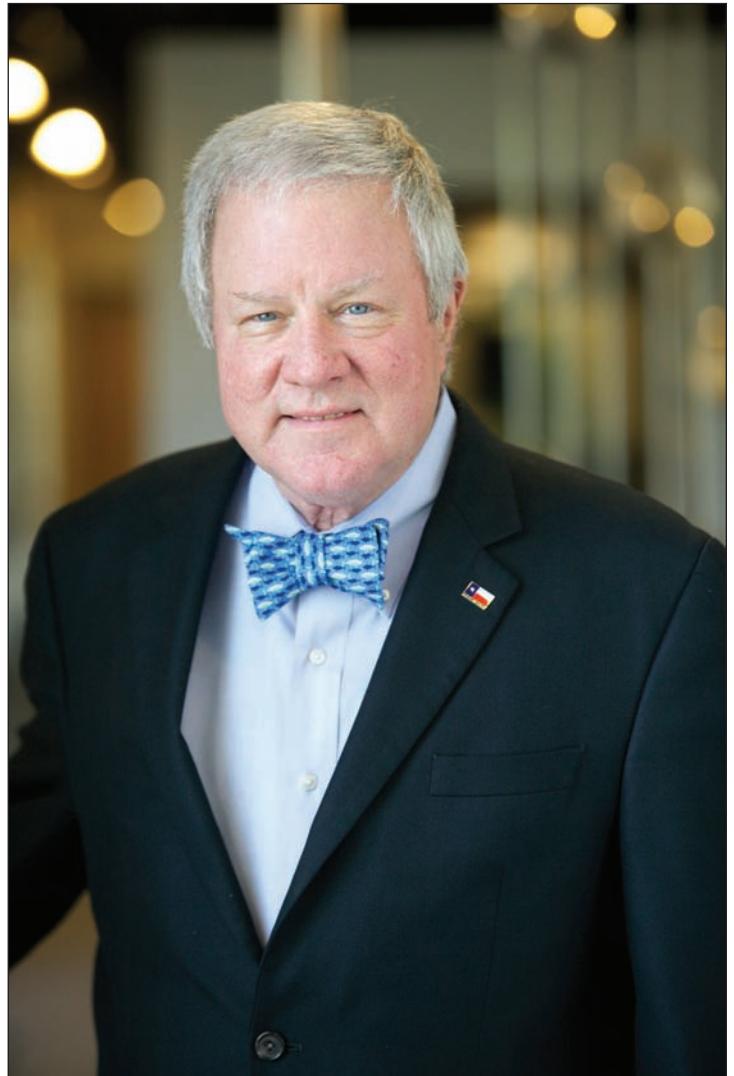
Sansom has dedicated his career to the field of environmental conservation. Prior to joining The Meadows Center, he served as executive director of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, executive director of the Texas Nature Conservancy and is founder of The Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas. His career has also taken him to Washington, D.C., where he was on the staff of the National Recreation and Park Association; served as the environmental coordinator for the White House Conference on Youth; was the special assistant to Secretary of the Interior Rogers Morton; and worked as director of conservation education at the Federal Energy Administration.

He is a recipient of the Chevron Conservation Award, the Chuck Yeager Award from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Pugsley Medal from the National Parks Foundation and the Seton Award from the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

Sansom's articles have appeared in Texas Monthly, The Texas Observer, Houston City Magazine, Politics Today, Texas Highways, Texas Parks and Wildlife and Texas Town and City. He is also the author of two books, "Texas Lost" and "Texas Past."

Sansom has such a breadth of expertise in the conservation field both in Texas and nationally, particularly with water issues which concern everyone. If anyone needs a reason to come to the conference, hearing him speak is a huge one.

For the latest updates on the upcoming OWAA conference in McAllen Texas, May 23-25, 2014, go to [www.owaa.org/2014conference](http://www.owaa.org/2014conference). ■



As if you needed another reason to come to OWAA's conference in Texas in May, Andrew Sansom is the keynote speaker. **Photo courtesy Andrew Sansom.**



*A three-time Emmy-winning television producer and host and an award-winning freelance writer/photographer, Lisa Densmore is OWAA's Second Vice President in charge of programming at the 2014 OWAA conference in McAllen, Texas. [www.LisaDensmore.com](http://www.LisaDensmore.com).*

# Mark your calendar

## A few must-hit events in Texas



Photos courtesy McAllen Convention and Visitor's Bureau

### **Green Ribbon Meeting – Thursday, May 22**

First-time attendee? Learn the ropes and meet other new faces before conference kicks off. Join our conference coordinator and program chair as they go through the can't-miss events of conference and even get paired with a mentor to guide you throughout conference.



### **Brown Bag Discussion Lunch – Friday, May 23**

Take in a documentary or chat up an expert over lunch. Discussions cover local and national issues, including conservation and outdoor news, as well as general interest topics. Have a topic you would like to see covered? Let us know!



### **EIC Awards Party - Saturday, May 24**

You're invited to the new EIC Awards Party! No more sitting through long lists of winning entries. This year, the EIC Awards will be a lively audio-visual showcase of the best in outdoor writing, photography, television, radio and Internet. After the awards dinner and show, we'll celebrate with the country's top outdoor communicators with live music and a fun-filled evening! Don't forget to submit your EIC entries by Feb. 1 for your chance to win!



### **Photo Scavenger Hunt Critique – Sunday, May 25**

Win cash and prizes from behind the lens. All attending members are encouraged to enter this fun contest — photographers submit just one frame of each of the five required subjects, forcing them to “get it right” on a tight deadline. Join us as the on-the-spot, creative subject matter is presented, photos are critiqued and winners are announced.



### **Honorary Awards Banquet – Sunday, May 25**

Close conference with a bang as we recognize the incredible achievements and commitment of our members. From devoted past service to the organization to continued excellent in craft or outstanding Board service, these awards represent the highest honors of OWAA.

# Portfolio

OWAA at Lake Placid, N.Y.

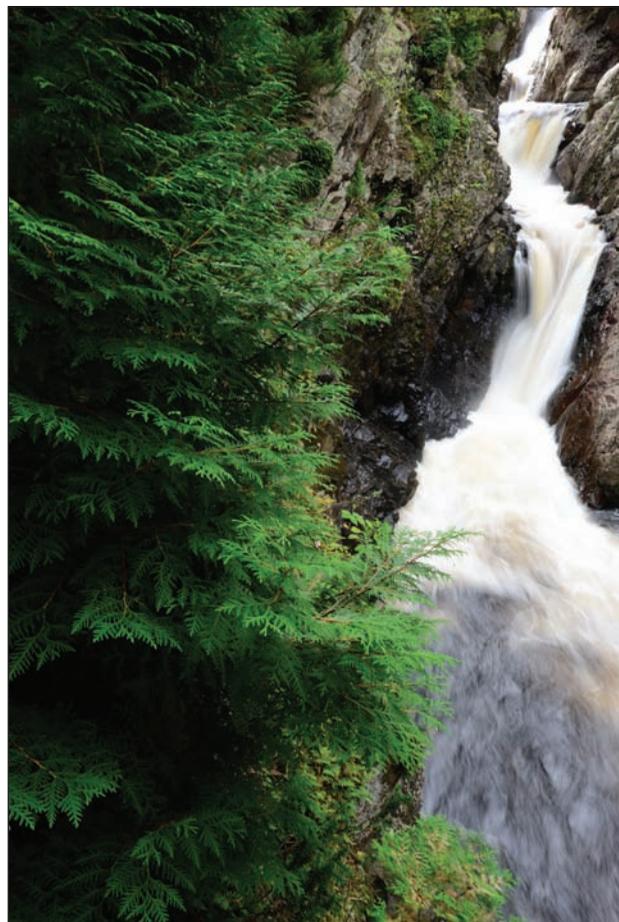
**When not honing their professional skills, attendees of this year's conference had plenty of chances to take in the scenery and experience the adventure Lake Placid offers. Check out what they saw with these member-submitted pictures from the September 2013 conference.**



The sun rises on Mirror Lake two blocks from the conference center. **Photo by Al Snow.**

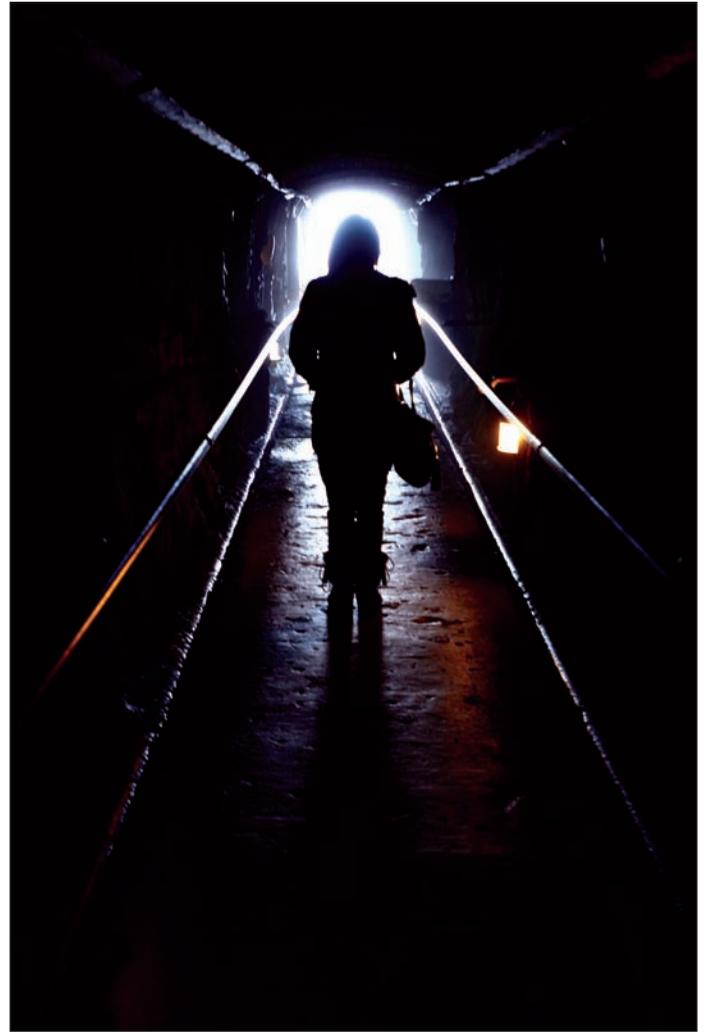


(Above) A hiker takes in the view from Mount Jo. **Photo by Lisa Densmore.** (Right) High Falls Gorge is a privately owned area on the Ausable River eight miles from Lake Placid. It has four waterfalls plunging 700-feet between high granite cliffs. **Photo by Stephen Kirkpatrick.**





The Lake Placid area provided plenty of stunning views. **Photo by Stephen Kirkpatrick.**



Marlo Kirkpatrick walks the 426-foot long tunnel from the parking lot to the elevator that takes visitors up 276-feet to the summit of the 4,867-foot summit of Whiteface Mountain. **Photo by Stephen Kirkpatrick.**

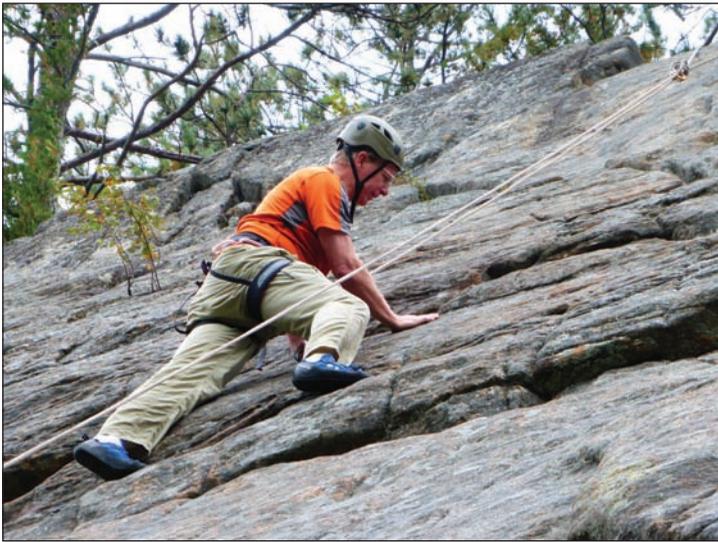


(Right) A paddler enjoys the fall colors. **Photo by Richard Walton.** (Above) Closed gentian and ground moss are common near Whiteface Mountain. **Photo by Stephen Kirkpatrick.**





**Jim Low** enjoys the trails near Lake Placid and captured a self portrait while hiking. **Photo courtesy Jim Low.**



**Pat Wray** rock climbs in Adirondacks State Park. **Photo by Debbie Wray.**



Fog rises on Heart Lake. **Photo by Ryck Lydecker.**

Whiteface Mountain created a beautiful backdrop at the conference.  
**Photo by Stephen Kirkpatrick.**



2013  
Norm Strung  
Youth Writing Awards

*Senior prose, First place*

## Dropping from November Skies

**BY COLE BRODY**

Faribault, Minn.

Much of the world is still asleep as the eastern skyline is alive with fire. I find myself in the middle of a Terry Redlin painting as I stand no more than 100 miles outside his stomping grounds. I'm sure he has seen and been inspired by this same sunrise many a time. If only for a moment we are intertwined.

As we unload the decoys, I feel a sense of similarity. I've played this game before. The pieces are all the same but this time the board has changed. A few friends and I have traveled west on the winds of the migration. We put over 300 miles on my buddy's pickup to cross over into God's country with no guarantee of anything, and we wouldn't have it any other way.

Our voyage will be earned not given with the distance and all the gear we need. Two dozen mallard floaters, one dozen mallard full bodies, three guns, two mojos and a lot of ammo — much of which we hope we won't have to haul back out. Anything with a strap we throw around our body, then we grab our guns and head into the jungle of CRP and reeds.

The light is coming faster than we wanted. Shooting time is already here as we push deeper and deeper into the land. This year's drought is not our friend right now, previous potholes are nothing but pockets of thick reeds. Twenty minutes ago I could see snowflakes dancing in and out of my headlamp's light but now those flakes are a distant memory as sweat begins to roll down my

sideburns. My pulse has quickened since the walk began. Half out of excitement and half out of hard work.

The journey from the truck to the pond we are going to set up on is nearly half of a mile. I don't think my waders had ever felt so heavy, every step is now a challenge. About halfway through and here come the reeds. I put the decoy bag down in front of me. I then begin to barrel through, much like a big buck cutting through brush with his head down. It's not easy, it's not efficient but it's the only way.

At this point I'm at war with myself. The body knows it's only just over halfway there. The body knows it will have to make the trip back. The body knows once there, the work is not done. The mind knows one thing, it only needs to know one thing. The mind knows yesterday this pond was loaded with ducks. Gadwall, wigeon, mallards and even a few pintails. The mind knows best.

Dripping in my perspiration I reach the crest of a hill. From there I see the pond with a nice sprinkle of ducks on it. My buddies and I all give each other a look. The look consists of triumph and tribulation, the look says we made it and we were all right where we wanted to be. As we approach the pond the ducks take to the air. They cut over a hill and head to another pond. They'll be back, we know it.

Now the games begin. We check the wind one last time and look for a place to set up. A thick chunk of reeds will be our home for the next couple of hours. We dump out all the decoy bags knowing the ducks aren't going to wait on us. It looks a bomb went off as floaters and full bodies litter the ground. My hands move quickly, my feet move quicker. I must do something in five minutes that I literally could spend six hours on and still not be happy.

Ducks are zipping around as I throw together a spread. I hustle but also try to be precise. In my eyes, the way you put together a decoy spread is a direct reflection of the kind of person you are.

There are those who throw together something and hope for

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### ABOUT THE CONTEST...

Part of OWAA's mission is to foster the next generation of outdoors communicators, and the 2013 Norm Strung Youth Writing Awards Committee recently awarded prizes totaling \$1,700, sponsored by Safari Club International and Safari Club International Foundation. The annual contest has categories for poetry and prose in two divisions: junior (grades 6-8) and senior (grades 9-12). Entries must be outdoors-oriented and previously published in a newsletter, newspaper,



magazine, literary collection or other publication. First-place winners received \$250; second-place winners received \$125; and third-place winners received \$100. A list of this year's winners is published at [www.owaa.org/contests/norm-strung-youth-writing-awards](http://www.owaa.org/contests/norm-strung-youth-writing-awards). Congratulations to the contest winners, and thank you to contest sponsors! OWAA is now accepting entries for the 2014 contest. Deadline is March 15, 2014. Visit the above website for details.

*Senior prose, Second place*

# What Archery Hunting Means to Me

**BY GINA PALMITER**

Clarks Summit, Penn.

This is not a victory story. But it is a success story. After mistakes, frustration and regret, it all finally stuck; but unfortunately, all too late. The tears streamed from my eyes for the first time, I truly realized how much all this means to me.

Five years ago, my father introduced me to the sport of archery hunting and placed the bow in my hands for the first time; the tight release grasped my wrist, sweat beaded my palms, my heart pounded and knees shook, and the arrow sliced the air with no mercy and never looked back. From that moment on, I was hooked for life.

The immense amount of discipline, focus, will, determination, and physical and psychological strength that is commanded for every single shot with the bow and arrow is unparalleled to any difficulty I have ever elsewhere faced.

It has shown me both the hardship and reward. From the first moment I picked up the bow and shot my very first arrow, it was a struggle, never once easy. And after every harvest of an animal, I fell on my knees and cried, and thanked God and my dad for the opportunities and the blessing to hunt and harvest.

At 13, I retrieved my first doe with the bow. At 14, I harvested my first buck with the bow. At 15, I retrieved my second doe with the bow. At 16, I harvested my second buck with the bow. But at 17, I messed up just a little.

It was the last day of archery season, and the pressure was on. The sound of the alarm jolted me awake, sending an electric burst of adrenaline through my body. Hunting on our land in northeastern Pennsylvania, it had been hard practice since June and a difficult hunting season so far. Some long hours of frigid temps, bulked up in every pair of sweatpants I own, of nothing but no luck and annoying squirrels who pretend they are deer.

The sky was pitch black as I climbed into my tree along the field. The stand stuck out like a sore thumb, so utter stone stillness was commanded. As the dawn turned to day, jitters squirmed through my stomach and trembled through all my muscles, while the excitement pumped my heart and sweat beaded my palms. A few does crossed by my stand 10 yards away, but I waited patiently with the hopes a buck might follow; half standing, half sitting, urgently still.

After a few hours crawled by, the tension began to build as the luck-less minutes floated away. Praying that I got a chance, after a long season of hard practice and

endless hours, excitement and disappointment, it was all I wanted.

As the sun reached its peak, my stomach grumbled and my mind pondered. Waiting patiently in my stand, now for five hours, I tried to keep the hope, for the day was young. I scanned the forest back and forth as I sat relaxed in my stand with uneasy tensions about what the future held. In a blink, one of the biggest bucks I had ever seen came out into the field, 50 yards away from me.

“Oh my gosh.” He stood like a giant, sniffing and peering on the run that traveled straight down to my stand. My stomach sank and my heart pounded as my knees and arms shook. When his head was down to the grass, I slowly reached for my bow and began to stand up.

Big mistake.

His head flew up and zoned all his attention on me. I froze like a stone, but it was already too late. A repetitive “no” was the only thing I could mutter. He intently focused all his attention on me; there was nothing I could do.

He stomped his foot. No ...

He turned around. No ...

I grabbed my grunt tube and blew a desperate last-hope grunt. Nothing ...

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*Senior poetry, Third place*

## I Am From

**BY JAKE MARSHALL**

Rhinebeck, N.Y.

I am from the mountains of New York,  
The trails of my Grandfather's woods,  
The cooking of my Grandmother's stove,  
The amazing and dangerous tales of my Uncle's journeys.

I am from the woods,  
Where I hear roars and howls of faraway beasts,  
I see trees, grown tall from the earth for generations,  
The darkness of the forest is scary,  
I feel a cool wind, blowing leaves off the trees.

I am from fire,  
The fire is hot,  
Warming our souls,  
I am from the coldness of winter,  
Sleigh rides cutting through the white snow,  
Snowballs hitting me, thrown from my cousin's hands.

I am from the history of the giant hills,  
I am from the echoes lost to the land,  
I am from the simplicity of life.

*Junior prose, Second place*

# Big Fish, Bigger Smiles

**BY SARAH ZUMBROCK**

Grand Rapids, Mich.

One spine-tingling cold day, Jonathon, my older brother, and I went out ice fishing with our parents. My dad took us to a favorite spot of his to fish for pike.

We had just set down the last wooden tip-up in the jet black water when a little girl dragged her grandfather out onto the slippery ice near us. She marched right up to my dad and started a friendly conversation. On a previous fishing trip, she and her grandpa met my dad on the ice, and he learned that they had never been ice fishing before.

Before long, one of the bright, red flags on the tip-ups sliced through the crisp air and halted at 90 degrees north. My dad, the first one to notice, said, "Who wants to pull the line up?" intending either Jonathon or me.

Unexpectedly, the little girl shouted, "Me, me, me," as if it was a life-or-death situation. My dad, not wanting to be rude, willingly let her tug the line up, inch by inch. With his help, the seven-year-old girl caught a 25½-inch pike. Her loving grandpa must have been very proud, because he had a huge smile plastered across his chubby face.

Soon, the two of them walked away, leaving their slimy fish on the snow-covered ice. My dad had offered it to them, but they didn't want to deal with cleaning it.

Later that day, Jonathon caught a 24 ½-inch pike. It was not as big as the little girl's fish, but it was still a keeper.

It came time for us to make our final rounds and I still hadn't caught a mere little minnow yet. When collecting the tip-ups, my job was to scoop slushy ice out of the hole so my dad could get the wet tip-up out. After he was done, he would twist up the ice-cold line with his bare hands and throw the remains of the bait into the plastic bucket.

On the second to last hole, my dad could tell there was a heavy fish on the line when he lifted the tip-up out of the water. My chance had finally come.

I grabbed the line and started pulling it in. I kept reminding myself, "grab, pull, release, grab, pull, release." Finally, the triangle-shaped head of a northern pike pierced through the pitch-black water and with a good fight, I landed what I hoped to be a keeper.

My dad pulled out his old, rusty tape measure and stretched it from the head to the fan-like tail. The fish was 26 inches long. I had just caught the biggest fish of the day.

The first words to slip out of my mouth were, "Little girl, you're going down." A small smile crept onto my frozen face while a big frown covered my dad's. I know I should have been happy for the little girl, but what can I say? My nine-year-old competitiveness got the better of me.

Since then, I go out fishing with my family every year. When I think back to that moment I realize that it was pretty cool that I, being nine years old, got to teach a younger girl how to ice fish. It's a great thing for kids to experience what nature has put out there for them, in a fun way, and I hope that little girl thinks so, too. ■

*Junior poetry, First place*

# Ode to a Crocus

**BY CLAIRE DAUGE-ROTH**

Bath, Maine

Crocus —  
your vibrant  
green shoots  
perforate  
the densest dirt.  
As you have for ages,  
you scatter the countryside  
with your ecstatic blossom,  
reminding the passerby  
of things to come.

Crocus —  
you are  
the hope and prayer  
of a poor man  
as you spread  
your creamy-colored flesh  
across his fields.

You,  
Crocus,  
are beauty royal.  
Your petals,  
crystalized with dew,  
retract at dusk  
to flourish again  
as the first rays  
of golden warmth  
brush your exquisite wings.

Dearest Crocus,  
you were delivered  
into this world

by Flora,  
the goddess of flowers.  
Krokos you were named  
when she laid you  
in the cradle of a valley,  
and a cardinal  
sang your lullaby.

Crocus,  
your angelic petals  
concoct a lilac goblet  
from which mankind  
gulps  
every last drop  
of your rich liqueur.

And like the dove,  
an olive branch clutched  
in its beak,  
you, Crocus,  
bring hope.  
Crocus,  
as you pierce  
shallow remnants  
of winter flurries,  
I perceive  
a sudden change in the air  
that I might  
have missed.

Your reminder  
was all  
I needed.

*Junior prose, First place*

## One Feisty Fish

**BY JESSICA ROBACH**

Perry, Mich.

A gentle breeze swept across the water, leaving soft ripples behind. I looked up at the morning sky, which was stained pink with the rising sun. Long grass twirled in the wind. I suddenly heard the sound of our tent being unzipped.

“Ready for some fishing?” my dad whispered, stepping out of the tent. I grinned. “You bet!” I said excitedly.

We sat at the campfire, its long, angled strips stretching toward the sky. “Want to go out now?” asked my dad after we chowed down some scrambled eggs. “Yup, looks like a great day to fish,” I said as my stomach flopped with anticipation.

We heaved the canoe into the gentle waters of Lake Georgiana. The sun’s rays were now spilling through the leaves of the trees, which were sprinkled with drops of dew. “Then let’s go catch a fish,” my dad replied. “Is the Pop-R alright?” I had only learned to use the Pop-R the day before. “Let’s give it a try,” I told Dad.

As we started gliding along the water, my dad cast out and I quickly heard his echoing voice yell, “Fish on!” I whipped around as my father reeled in a puny, two-inch fish. “Ha, ha. Very funny,” I grumbled as my dad let the skimpy fish go.

By midday we were fish-less and hot. Our skin itched as we used the last of the sunscreen to try to shield us from the blazing ball of heat above us.

“Should we go in?” Dad asked. “No way,” I said. “We’re going to catch that fish.”

I cast out, almost snagging a dainty cattail leaf. I glanced over

toward my dad as I worked the Pop-R through the water. But my attention was soon directed elsewhere as I felt my lure being engulfed by an absolutely monstrous fish. The explosion of the fish attacking my lure jerked me forward.

“Set the hook,” my dad bellowed. “Set the hook!”

The fish fought with all its might. The canoe stirred, rocking back and forth under the huge fish’s control. I reeled with both hands grasping the pole, which was now bent in an arc.

“Dad,” I choked. “Any suggestions?”

“Slow and easy does it,” he replied in a low voice.

I saw silver streaks flash under the water. “Almost there,” I gasped. My arms were jerking back and forth from the weight of the fish. I heaved on the pole one last time and saw a huge swirl at the side of the canoe. My dad quickly splashed the net into the water and scooped up the ginormous, glistening fish.

Smiles stretched ear-to-ear on both of our faces. I sighed with relief as I checked to make sure I still had both of my arms.

“Good job, Bass Queen,” my dad said. I had caught a monster largemouth bass. It was heavier than a pile of bricks. After we snapped some pictures, I glanced at the fish and said, “I’m going to let him go.” I picked up that big oaf and released him back into the water. I smiled and said, “That was the catch of the day.”

As we packed up for home, my dad and I babbled about how much fun we’d had, and I teased him about his catch. I smiled at him and said, “I really had a good time.”

“I did too, Bass Queen,” my dad said.

I caught my last glimpse of Lake Georgiana as we drove off down the road.

I laughed and said, “That sure was one feisty fish.” ■

*Senior poetry, Second place*

## Changes of Autumn

**BY STEPHEN MILLER**

Coloma, Mich.

The wind is blowing through the pines; Winter is coming in.  
The sky is full of dark grey lines; Snowfall will soon begin.

The leaves run fast along the ground; the air is bitter cold.  
The squirrel packs nuts by the pound, as if collecting gold.

The coyote sheds his summer coat; the bat hides in the cave.  
The duck floats like a little boat, upon the rolling wave.

The trees make a colorful blaze, of yellow, orange and red.  
They brighten up the darkest days, before they shave their heads.

The night is longer than the day; the fox can see his breath.  
Mosquitoes that came out in May, finally meet their death.

The deer run all around the woods; the rut is fully on.  
The farmer harvests all his goods; frost will be seen at dawn.

*Senior poetry, First place*  
**Memory Slope**

**BY DARBY MARTIN**

Moscow, Idaho

I just woke up  
 Too excited to change  
 Into my day apparel.  
 Wearing pajamas and snow gear  
 About to leave  
 Walking to the big, maroon  
 Ford F-150,  
 I feel the excitement building.  
 With hot cocoa in hand  
 I put my hat on  
 Then gloves, then scarf.  
 The cold awaits me.  
 The warm truck  
 My dad driving  
 Me in the front seat  
 Brother and sister in the back  
 Sleds in the bed.  
 Finally, we are there.  
 We jump out of the truck  
 Not even in park yet.  
 We grab our favorite sled and  
 run  
 Over the hill, looking down  
 The wide, long fairway  
 Hole one  
 U of I Golf Course  
 Blanket of snow covering  
 invisible grass  
 Awaiting our arrival.  
 We start marking out tracks  
 Already getting cold  
 Not caring, having too much

fun.  
 Snowflakes falling  
 With the gray, early morning  
 Laughs fill the air  
 Smiles shoot back and forth  
 Snowballs here and there.  
 Working  
 Hoping our hard work will be  
 as great as we think  
 Finally we finish the paths.  
 Each of us grabs a sled  
 Our dad watches over us  
 Laughing and smiling as he  
 does.  
 We all push off.  
 Who will win?  
 It's Preston.  
 Oh, little brothers.  
 We all start to climb the hill  
 Only to do it again.  
 Next comes the train rides  
 Holding on to one another's  
 sleds.  
 I have a feeling this won't  
 work.  
 We do it anyway.  
 We crash into each other.  
 Flipping and tumbling  
 Rolling down the hill.  
 Now it's his turn.  
 I sit down.  
 He sits right behind me  
 Gives us a push.  
 Down the hill we go  
 Laughing  
 Playful screaming

Smiles, wide as the ears.  
 Back up.  
 His turn with Preston  
 Then Emily.  
 On this went  
 For the rest of the day  
 Happiness  
 Love  
 Our family.  
 The cold finally got to us.  
 Looking back at the hill  
 I see all the tracks  
 Snow angels  
 And boot prints left behind.  
 Laughs and smiles  
 Still float in the air.  
 Light snow, gray clouds  
 Picking up the sleds  
 Shaking off the excess snow  
 Blue-ish lips  
 Rosy cheeks and noses  
 Shivering teeth  
 Soaking socks, gloves, and hats  
 Nice warm truck  
 Heading home  
 To a warm house.  
 Warm blankets  
 Hot chocolate  
 Nothing to do for the rest of the  
 day  
 But movies and naps.  
 Memories of the day  
 Stay forever  
 Within the heart.  
 Years later  
 He's gone

But the memories are not.  
 He died two years ago, today.  
 Sadness  
 Memories  
 Love  
 One of my favorite memories  
 Sledding  
 Family  
 We haven't gone back there  
 The U of I Golf Course.  
 I still smile  
 When I think about that day  
 Don't talk about it much.  
 But that's okay.  
 Tears come and go  
 When I think about it.  
 Wish I could re-live it  
 Have that much fun again  
 Be that happy again  
 Smile like I did  
 Laugh like I did  
 See them smile and laugh  
 Be free, Let go.  
 I wish I could go back.  
 We haven't gone back there  
 The U of I Golf Course.  
 I still smile  
 When I think about that day  
 Don't talk about it much  
 But that's okay.  
 Tears come and go  
 When I think about it.  
 I wish I could re-live it  
 And have that much fun again.  
 Wish I could go back.

**ARCHERY HUNTING**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

He scurried away. No ...  
 I watched his white horns disappear  
 through the barren branches. The bitter  
 feeling tore at my heart and abandoned me  
 with the impossible wish to go back in time  
 just a few seconds. Tears filled my eyes and  
 blurred my vision. Anger stormed through  
 my veins as I watched him run away, run  
 farther and farther away from me, like  
 slowly pulling a dagger out of a bloody  
 wound.  
 Disappointment suffocated my heart, and  
 left me cold and alone to bear the solitude

of my fatuity.  
 That was the last deer I saw that day.  
 Six hours later, blackness returned to the  
 sky. Disappointed, me and my stiffened,  
 numb muscles climbed down from my tree  
 together and met my dad down the path. As  
 we were walking out of the woods together,  
 my dad patted my back and shook me a  
 little and said, "Good job, kid." I have never  
 loved archery hunting more than I do right  
 now. My success.  
 That day I realized what hunting means  
 to me and what it is truly all about. I could  
 sit in a tree for hours with no luck and a  
 crushed heart, but at the end of the day, it

was a day well spent.  
 It was a blessing to spend a moment in  
 time in God's creation, enjoying my life in  
 the solitude of the wilderness, challenging  
 myself to the extreme with the bow and  
 arrow, making mistakes, but learning and  
 growing as a person all the while.  
 The adrenaline, the rush, the excitement,  
 the nerves, the strength, the hunt, the story  
 and the time with my dad is what hunting  
 is all about to me. The horns, the trophy  
 and the glory don't even cross my mind  
 anymore. My love of archery hunting will  
 manifest in my heart forever.  
 Next up ... rifle season, baby. ■

*Senior prose, Third place*

## The Detail's in the Devils

**BY TANNER HARDY**

Spokane, Wash.

In eighth-grade earth science we learned all about mountains.

Sitting on top of the molten core of the Earth, continent-sized tectonic plates drift imperceptibly due to currents in the magma beneath them.

When these colossal forces of nature collide and struggle against each other, neither able to force the other back into the magma below, they crush together and bend upwards toward the sky.

Through millions of years of weathering and erosion, a mountain — as we see it today — forms.

However, no textbook, lecture or canned “classroom experiment” can adequately describe the feeling of standing at the base of one of these massive monuments to geology, seeing the summit, wreathed in wisps of cloud, and preparing to pit one’s will against nature to reach that goal.

The summer before my freshman year, I faced such a task. The whole week, my Scout troop and I had been backpacking in the Seven Devils Mountains — with no car or boat or support vehicle. We carried all our supplies and gear on our backs.

Situated in Idaho near the Snake River, across from the northeastern tip of Oregon, this wild collection of high peaks and frigid mountain lakes lies untamed and unforgiving. Steep inclines, long days, endless mileage, bitterly cold water, thin mountain air and dehydrated food combined to wear us down physically and mentally as the five-day, 60-plus-mile ordeal wore on. Then we came to the base of She-Devil.

Triumphantly piercing the sky at over 9,300 feet, She-Devil stands as a brazen challenge to any individual brave or foolish enough to attempt a scramble up its sheer faces. We were both.

Steaming and sweating, we ascended boulder fields covered in snow, despite the late summer sun beating down. Reaching the last set of ridges leading up to the peak, danger abounded. Narrow ledges provided unsure footing, and one step on a wobbly stone could have easily sent a careless hiker to certain demise on the harsh rocks far below. With a little luck and some help from each other, we all safely arrived at the summit.

Rock-bestrewn and barely large enough to fit our group, the tip of the mountain provided little in the way of restful seats, but what it lacked in comfort, it made up for in majesty.

As we sat and gazed at the thousands of miles surrounding us, silence fell over the group — not giggle-ridden classroom silence but a deep, profound silence, it seemed as if the height of our perch and the crisp, cold air blocked all noise from below and within, leaving us isolated, alone with our thoughts, able to peer into the depths of our souls and see just how we felt.

Even now as I ponder the experience, my breath grows short and I can see the sprawling landscape. I can remember the feeling of peace and wisdom I felt. After signing the summit log and taking some pictures, we descended back into the clamor of life almost reluctantly and — at least in my case — changed.

The world we live in feeds us a constant stream of sound: from a friend’s voice, to music on the radio, to a scolding parent, to a talkative

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*Junior poetry,  
Second place*

## Seven Twister

**BY WALLACE JACKSON**

Edgecomb, Maine

We sit in the canoe —  
he’s in the back, I’m in the  
front.

A tapered leader twists in  
the evening breeze.

He hands me the green fly  
box,  
and I open it in awe:  
thirty years collection and  
selection.

But I don’t want the green  
box.

I reach for the steel case  
— the selection of flies  
like no other.  
That box was handmade in  
England, you know.  
Your grandpa tied all the  
flies in there.  
I pop it open.

Fingers touch  
the strong black bristles  
of a leech pattern

grasshopper.  
Eyes scan  
the streaming yellow  
feather of a Mickey Finn.

Finally,  
I find it,  
the perfect fly:  
small brown plumes on  
both sides  
with a soft white tuft on  
top.

I remove it from the foam  
ridge.  
That’s a great fly, dad  
comments.  
I slip the line through the  
eye  
and tie it on.

Such a little knot  
never made  
such a strong connection.

*Junior poetry, Third place*  
**Harvest Song**

**BY HALEY HUGHES**

Gallipolis, Ohio

It was an early fall morning.  
 A hint of sunlight peeked through the trees.  
 Birds were awakening  
 To a brisk autumn breeze.

The forest was dampened  
 By an overnight shower.  
 But the skies have cleared up  
 By this early morning hour.

We find our way down the path  
 To our two-person stand.  
 From our spot in the tree  
 We can survey all the land.

There's a noise in the leaves.  
 Something is coming our way.  
 It's a pair of small squirrels  
 That had decided to play.

I watched as they ran  
 And flocked around.  
 I made every effort  
 Not to make a sound.

Off to my left  
 I see something new.  
 It's slipping along  
 In the morning dew.

It looks like a doe  
 Followed by a fawn.  
 They're strolling along  
 Just a kid and its mom.

They move on along.  
 We let them pass by.  
 We are hunting a trophy  
 But none caught our eye.

It feels like forever.  
 Time seems to stand still.  
 We've been waiting all morning  
 In search of our kill.

Just when I thought  
 Our hunt's almost done,  
 I see a big deer.  
 This could be the one.

I'm dressed all in camo  
 In a stand in a tree.  
 I try to sit still  
 So he doesn't see me.

I reach for my bow.  
 He's headed our way.  
 The deer of a lifetime,  
 Here comes my prey.

He's taking his time.  
 His nose close to the ground.  
 This day started slow,  
 But it's turning around.

I load my arrow.  
 He'll soon be close enough.  
 My heart's pounding faster.  
 Staying calm will be tough.

At 25 yards,  
 I get ready to shoot.  
 With a head full of antlers,  
 This buck is a brute.

I look through my sight.  
 I take aim holding still.  
 I start breathing harder.  
 I just love how this feels.

He drops his head down.  
 My arrow takes flight.  
 I hit the same spot  
 I saw through my sight.

He jumps and kicks.  
 He runs toward the brush.  
 We'll sit, we'll wait.  
 We don't want to rush.

It's been almost an hour,  
 Since I made that deer mine.  
 Time for a walk.  
 I've got a trophy to find.

We walk several yards.  
 I make not a sound  
 Until I look up ahead  
 And see my big buck on the ground.

Some girls like to shop,  
 Buy special things at the mall.  
 But my prized possession,  
 Will soon be hanging on the wall.

## THE DETAIL'S IN THE DEVILS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

sibling, to a commercial on television, noise bombards us. We even inflict it upon ourselves, from those who sing loudly in the shower, to those who perpetually bear music-blaring headphones.

Genuine silence seems forgotten. Yet, how do we honor the valiant slain soldiers of our country or the tragic loss of friends and family? With a moment of silence, an undeniably powerful experience.

On the fierce pinnacle of She-Devil, I learned the irrefutable potency of silence in affecting attitudes, giving perspective and

transforming personalities. Underneath us and around us, the forces of nature move along methodically. Apart from the occasional thunderstorm, earthquake or other natural disaster, the vast majority of geological time marches on in peace. Plates shift, breezes blow, currents flow. Waves endlessly lap the shore, rivers carve deep valleys, winds shift endless mounds of dirt and sand and mountains form, all without our notice.

Yet, despite the monumental significance of these events, to what soundtrack is this glorious drama of nature set to?

Silence.

All it took was a tussle with a Devil to figure it out. ■

*Junior prose, Third place*

# The Best Teal Hunt Ever

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**BY SETH ABEL**

Johnstown, Ohio

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It was 2 a.m. on October 13 when my brother, my dad and I got our camouflage on, grabbed our guns, decoys and breakfast. and got in the van.

It was pitch black in the early hours of the morning as we drove for about three hours to the controlled hunt near the Indiana border. The excitement mounted as we got out and went inside the maintenance garage to pick a blind. When it came my turn, I chose blind number 3 — a new blind that was recently installed on the area. We got our gear ready (including a new pair of waders for my dad) and headed to the blind — just a few hundred yards from the parking area. Our blind was a concrete pit blind with a flooded cornfield out in front. It also had a cut cornfield behind it and a cornfield at the side.

After we got situated at the blind, we quickly started spreading our decoys out in the shallow water of the flooded corn. We had about a dozen floating mallard decoys in the flooded part and about two dozen Canada goose decoys in the cut cornfield behind us. We use rag decoys with plastic heads from shell decoys placed on wooden dowel rods that are put through the rag decoys to hold them open and upright. After we got our decoys spread out, we got in our blind and waited for the sun to rise.

Even before the sun had risen, about a half dozen blue-winged teal landed in our decoy spread. Soon it was time we could shoot and the excitement was tremendous. Birds started flying everywhere. Before we knew it, a flock of blue-winged teal were about to land in our decoys. Bang, bang, bang, one teal fell in the water. My brother had gotten the first bird.

I was not going to give up though. Soon, another flock of teal came into range. Bang, bang, I got one. After that, I got on my waders and went and got my brother's bird out of the water. Mine had landed near the water but not in it.

After we got our birds, we quickly jumped back into our pit blind. Soon, more teal came into our decoys and landed. We waited for them to fly up but they just sat there. Soon after that we heard geese so we looked around. I looked over to my left and saw a flock of at least 25. I told the others to look. As soon as they were close enough, I shot and dropped one.

Then after that more teal were flying in and as soon as they were in range bang, bang, bang. I dropped one more bird into the flooded corn. We got out and started looking for the birds. We looked and looked and we finally found it. Unfortunately it was still alive. We surrounded it so we could catch it without too much stress on the bird. As soon as I saw it, I quickly grabbed it to dispatch it as soon as possible. Some of the hunters in a nearby blind weren't too happy with us as we searched for our wounded birds, but we didn't want them to suffer and we certainly didn't want them to get away and die later.

After a while the flocks of teal became less frequent but the flocks of geese came more often. Soon my brother had dropped a bird and we went off to retrieve it from the nearby corn.

After a few hours of calling, shooting and retrieving, it was time to head back home to a trap shooting event that we were scheduled to attend. It was a long drive back, but the excitement of the hunt was still fresh in our minds as my brother and I fell asleep during the van ride back home.

After the trap shoot, we wrapped up the day with some skinning and plucking and some good story telling — stories that will be told again and again as we relive the best teal hunt ever. ■

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## NOVEMBER SKIES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

success. Then there are those who thoughtfully put something together and wait for success. I see myself as the latter of the two.

I wipe my damp, dirty hands after tossing out my last decoy. In the blind I admire my piece of work. The mojos spin and floaters ride the slight tug of the current in complete harmony. We have a great pond, great cover and the wind is at our back. Everything is in order it appears, except for one thing. I open the action on my Winchester, she slides back like she's been waiting for this for a long time. I throw one round in the chamber and hit the button. She snaps shut, there isn't a thing that's going to hold her back today. I take two other shells and feed them through the bottom one at a time. Click. Click.

With the last click I am sent into a state of reflection. Somewhere

deep within myself asks a voice, "Is this really going to be worth it? Is it going to be worth the trouble? Is it going to be worth the sleep lost? Is it going to be worth the dollars burned? Is it going to be worth the ..."

My inner conversation is drowned out by the outside world.

"Ducks right, ducks right," my buddy says.

I raise my head and look into the November sky. There they are, a flock of nine wigeon dropping from the heavens. They cut like knives in the sky. They are doing everything they can to line up just like I wanted them to. I urge my buddies, "Wait for 'em. Wait for 'em. Wait for 'em. Cut 'em." I pop up from my knee and line up on a drake. As my safety slides into fire another voice speaks up from within. He says but three words.

"Without a doubt." ■

## ASSOCIATION UPDATE

### DONORS

October brought monetary gifts from generous donors. These tax-deductible donations are dedicated to funds designed to boost OWAA efforts ranging from education programs to operational costs. For details about OWAA funds, contact OWAA headquarters at 406-728-7434.

**Sam Caldwell**  
**Bruce Cochran**  
**Alex B. Hamilton**  
**John Kruse**  
**Carol Lynde**  
**Stephen M. Miller**  
**Gary W. Moore**  
**Angelo Peluso**  
**Shane Townsend**

### NEW MEMBERS

New OWAA members from October and November 2013:

**Leon Archer**  
**Bryce Bekar**  
**Jenni Bidner**  
**Christen Duxbury**  
**Rick Fowler**  
**Sarah Grigg**  
**Robert Henke**  
**Edward Kanze**  
**Lynda Lambert**  
**Marie Majarov**  
**David Majure**  
**Richard A. Minich**  
**John Rust**  
**Johnny Sain Jr.**  
**Hank Shaw**  
**Brian Wright**  
**Judy A. Benson**  
**Tod Cheney**  
**John P. Harris**  
**Josh M. Honeycutt**  
**Michael Kallok**  
**Cash W. Lambert**  
**Erik M. Neumann**  
**Nadia White**  
**Jonna M. Yost**

### REINSTATED MEMBERS

**Daniel W. Draz**, (Active Member)  
 931 W. 75th St., Ste. 137-303, Naperville, IL 60565. (H) 630-428-3751, [dwdraz@comcast.net](mailto:dwdraz@comcast.net). Published author, now writing freelance articles for the outdoor industry detailing interesting, humorous and unique observations of the angling experience in addition to father- and- son fishing adventures. Additionally in development of multimedia content for outdoor radio and researching a book on Midwest angling. Currently published monthly in Outdoor Notebook, a regional hunting and fishing publication in Illinois and Indiana. Striving toward national publication in the outdoor industry and trying to expand outdoor writing as a freelance destination and outdoor travel writer.

**Paul Lebowitz**, (Active Member) 9630 Capricorn Way, San Diego, CA 92126. (H) 858-578-0373, (W) 858-254-3600, [kayakfishingzone@gmail.com](mailto:kayakfishingzone@gmail.com), [www.kayakfishmag.com](http://www.kayakfishmag.com). Work is focused on fishing and paddle sports. Editor, Kayak Fish. Contributor to Paddler magazine, Kayak Fishing, Pacific Coast Sportfishing, Fish-Rap, Sea Kayaker, Canoe and Kayak Online and other publications; contributor of news stories to California's sportfishing press. (Susan)

### CREDENTIALS REVIEWS

The following members have successfully passed the review of their member credentials:

**Jill Adler**  
**James Casey Allen**  
**Natalie Bartley**  
**Christopher James Batha**  
**Celeste C. Baumgartner**  
**Ric Burnley**  
**T. J. Conrads**  
**Bill Crumrine**  
**Marc Folco**  
**R. C. "Bert" Gildart**  
**James C. Halfpenny**  
**Julie Hammonds**  
**Billy Higginbotham**  
**George Ingram**  
**Susan D. Jewell**  
**Roy K. Keefer**  
**Joel Lucks**  
**Terence McBurney**  
**James McCann**  
**Sean Mulready**

**Larry G. Myhre**  
**Jim Peters**  
**Alberto Rey**  
**Mark Sak**  
**Charlie Slovinsky**  
**Jerry L. Smalley**  
**Lowell Strauss**  
**Tom Watson**  
**David V. Buchanan**  
**Timothy T. Eisele**  
**Michael Hungle**  
**Keith Lockwood**  
**Dennis A. Neely**  
**Peter St. James**

### NEW SUPPORTING GROUPS, AGENCIES AND BUSINESSES

*Supporting Group listings include references to acronyms that relate to resources they provide. A key for those acronyms can be found at [www.owaa.org/ou/about-owaa-supporter-resources/](http://www.owaa.org/ou/about-owaa-supporter-resources/).*

**Allison+Partners**, 7135 E. Camelback Rd., Ste. 204, Scottsdale, AZ 85251. Contact: Amy O'Hara, senior account executive. (W) 623-201-5558, [amyo@allisonpr.com](mailto:amyo@allisonpr.com), [www.allisonpr.com](http://www.allisonpr.com). Allison+Partners is a fast-growing, best-in-class, communications firm with 13 offices on three continents and 160 colleagues. Supporter Resources: CGIOP.

**Conservation Hawks**, 178 Wolf Creek Ranch Rd., Bigfork, MT 59911. Contact: Todd Tanner, chairman. (W) 406-291-0857, [todd.tanner@mac.com](mailto:todd.tanner@mac.com), [www.conservationhawks.org](http://www.conservationhawks.org). Conservation Hawks is a group of passionate hunters and anglers devoted to protecting our sporting heritage and passing on a healthy natural world to our kids and grandkids. Our motto is "Hunters and Anglers Defending our Future." We're currently focused on educating sportsmen about the looming threat of climate change. We're working on climate change because it's the most important issue we face. Supporter Resources: C.

**Alaska Wilderness League**, 122 C St. NW, Ste. 240, Washington, DC 20001. Contact: Gwen Dobbs, national communications director. (W) 202-266-0418, [gwen@alaskawild.org](mailto:gwen@alaskawild.org), [www.AlaskaWild.org](http://www.AlaskaWild.org). Alaska Wilderness League's mission is to lead the effort to preserve Alaska's wild lands and waters by engaging citizens and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

## THE EYES HAVE IT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

owl and its overly large eyes that contained a clearly visible scene of a suburban garage and driveway containing a car and several onlookers. Although perfectly composed and exposed, neither the photographer, nor the publication's editor, had focused on those all-important eyes.

Of course, the appearance of the eyes can be manipulated in the computer, but we must strive to obtain the best quality photograph possible in the camera. Great images require little computer adjustment and result in images that please the eye of the beholder. ■



Tim Flanigan is an award winning, Pennsylvania based, freelance outdoor writer/photographer and a proud member of OWAA since 1996. Two of his images earned OWAA EIC awards in the association's 2013 awards program. Tim and his wife Debbie operate Nature Exposure, a freelance writing/photography business and Tim teaches digital photography at a local community college and other venues. You can view his work at [www.natureexposure.com](http://www.natureexposure.com).

## MARSHA SUE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

gun rights. Whether in the field or the office, Froman liked to have her around.

"She's a ball of fire, energetic, enthusiastic, upbeat, and very friendly and outgoing," Froman said.

In addition to speaking and writing, Sue volunteers for several conservation organizations. She is president of the Women's Outdoor Media Association, a member of the NRA Women's Leadership Forum Executive Committee with Froman, and a member of the Arizona Antelope Foundation.

Some of Sue's work with the antelope foundation involves removing or modifying

fences. Because antelope go under fences, the group removes barbs from the lowest wire, or removes the fence altogether, to help protect the animals from injury.

Outdoor Experience for All also gets her attention. Sue is passionate about getting others involved in conservation and into wilderness. Outdoor Experience for All is a nonprofit that gives terminally ill children a chance to explore and enjoy nature. As a volunteer she helps in any area she can, from organizing banquets to participating in activities with the kids.

On top of all that, Sue still writes and speaks professionally. She also goes outdoors with her husband and friends as often as possible. Staying busy and involved is important to her. She has produced more

than 30 books, CDs and DVDs, and her books have been translated into several languages.

"My mission in life is to give back more than I receive and connect my head and my heart to my mouth," she said. ■



Peter Van Horn is a student at the University of Montana. He believes that outdoor journalism is an essential tool to address real environmental issues. Van Horn is also interested in feature writing and wilderness photography. He joined OWAA as a journalism intern for the summer of 2013.

## ASSOCIATION UPDATE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

decision makers with a courageous, constant, victorious voice for Alaska. The League is made up of members from all 50 states working together to keep Alaska's wild places protected for future generations. Supporter Resources: C.

**Hawk Hunting**, 4820 Ridge Rd., Williamson, NY 14589. Contact: Jason Reid, marketing coordinator. (W) 585-944-6327, (Toll Free) 585-944-6327 (media only), [jason@hawkhunting.com](mailto:jason@hawkhunting.com). <http://hawkhunting.com>. Hunting isn't just something we do, it's part of who we are. We've combined that passion with over 50 years of cumula-

tive experience pushing the limits on product design, testing, manufacturing and bringing better products to the field. Born to reverse the trend of lower quality and under performing gear, Hawk is pushing the boundaries of design and engineering even further. It's knowing after hours of scouting, prepping and logging your hours you have the right gear to get the job done – demanding better. Our end mission is making sure you're equipped with the best. Hawk is a manufacturer of ergonomically designed treestands and hunting accessories. We take design seriously, everything we produce has been built from the ground up. Supporter Resources: G.

**Nighthawk Lights LLC**, 141 Pelham Dr., Ste. 142,

Columbia, SC 29209. Contact: Keith Lucas, managing member. (W) 803-271-0588, [klucas@nighthawklights.com](mailto:klucas@nighthawklights.com), <http://NighthawkLights.com>. Specialty flashlights and solar battery chargers.

**Zippo Outdoor**, 10700 Hwy. 55, Ste. 150, Minneapolis, MN 55441. Contact: Krissie Mason, director, public relations. (W) 763-452-2523, [kmason@revobg.com](mailto:kmason@revobg.com), [www.zippooutdoor.com](http://www.zippooutdoor.com). Born from Zippo's legacy of fire, durability and reliability, Zippo Outdoor offers a full line of products designed to enhance the outdoor experience. Whether in the backyard, the campsite or at the tailgate, Zippo Outdoor offers the performance consumers' expect while establishing

a new standard for quality that sets the brand apart in the marketplace. With products for flame, cooking and comfort, Zippo Outdoor is engineered to exceed and provides an outdoor experience that is unmistakably Zippo. Celebrating its 80th year of business in Bradford, Penn., Zippo is one of the most recognized brands in the world, and has produced over 500 million windproof lighters, each backed by an unparalleled lifetime guarantee. For additional information, please visit Zippo Outdoor at [www.ZippoOutdoor.com](http://www.ZippoOutdoor.com) or on Facebook. Supporter Resources: IGP.

## DECEASED MEMBERS

**Bel Lange**

## 2013-2014 OWAA COMMITTEES AND CHAIRS

<b>AWARDS</b> Mark Taylor	<b>DEVELOPMENT</b> Phil Bloom	<b>MEMBER RELATIONS</b> Colleen Miniuk-Sperry	<b>SECTIONS</b> Lisa Densmore
<b>BOARD NOMINATING</b> Kevin Rhoades	<b>DIVERSITY</b> Bill Graham	<b>MEMBERSHIP</b> Chris Hunt	<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b> Matt Miller
<b>BYLAWS REVISION</b> Tim Mead	<b>EDUCATION</b> Jason Jenkins	<b>NATIONAL AFFAIRS &amp; ENVIRONMENT</b> Paul Smith	<b>SUPPORTER RELATIONS</b> Lisa Densmore
<b>CONFERENCE PROGRAM</b> Lisa Densmore	<b>ETHICS</b> Terry Brady	<b>NORM STRUNG YOUTH WRITING</b> Steve Budnik	<b>TECHNOLOGY</b> Paul Queneau
<b>CONTESTS</b> Pat Stockdill and Dawn Faught	<b>FINANCE</b> Jack Ballard	<b>OFFICER NOMINATING</b> Tim Mead	<i>Complete list of committee members available online.</i>
<b>CRAFT IMPROVEMENT</b> Kris Millgate	<b>MARKETING</b> Paul Queneau	<b>PAST PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL</b> Mark Taylor	

## The Ins and Outs of Epublishing

### SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

#### BY RODNEY SMITH

CEO/PUBLISHER AT LITTLE POND PUBLISHING

I've worked hand-in-hand with hundreds, if not thousands, of outdoor journalists during the past 20 years.

In the early 1990s, with the encouragement of fellow author John Kumiski, I sold my first of several articles to Florida Sportsman magazine. It wasn't long after that I became a member of the Florida Outdoor Writers Association (FOWA) and started publishing a newsprint magazine, Coastal Angler magazine, using the old format of cut and paste. Throughout the years, I've seen the good, bad and ugly sides of publishing, all while negotiating the wild roller coaster ride of transitioning from print to digital publishing.

Leadership must work with vision, because without it you're dead in the water. Today as a team player of Little Pond

Publishing, a digital publishing house, I see a plethora of opportunities for storytellers that will change the publishing world — where authors and publishers are working together on a more even playing ground. A world will be opening up for writers, full of uniquely designed digital tools available to a wider pool of talent. The cost of books and publishing books will decline and readership will increase due to the many digital platforms available to readers. The storytellers will retain a larger percent of their profits with global distribution. This will be a time of positive change and transformation for all of us.

Publishers will still be in demand, especially the ones who understand their challenges and strategize according to the fast pace of change. Likewise for storytellers, we will survive; some of us will do better than ever before. Even though many writers want to dive into the new digital world, some are finding the new formats puzzling and confusing to model. For instance, at last year's annual FOWA convention, author Lucy Tobias, gave an excellent presentation on digital publishing. Afterwards, she asked the packed room, "How many of you would like to publish an e-book?" Nearly all of

the outdoor writers in the room raised their hands and shook their heads affirmatively. Then Lucy asked, "How many of you have published an e-book?" Only one hand was raised.

Outdoor photojournalists deliver the message of embracing the outdoors, appreciating fishing, hunting and nature in a visually astounding perspective. They carry with them and write profound words on outdoor participation and conservation, sharing with their readers insights and concerns for nature and recreation.

The future of outdoor photojournalism is changing, like many aspects of life itself. It is challenging, rewarding and always interesting. I'm confident that Little Pond Publishing will help build the bridges needed to connect these very special storytellers to the new and influential world of digital publishing. ■

*Author and conservationist Rodney Smith is CEO and publisher at Little Pond Publishing. To learn more about them, visit [www.littlepondpublishing.com](http://www.littlepondpublishing.com). Contact him at 321-750-3375.*

# Congrats to the 2013 OWAA honorary award recipients

## **JADE OF CHIEFS AWARD**

**Shannon Tompkins**, of Houston, Texas, received the 2013 Jade of Chiefs Award. The Jade of Chiefs Award was first established in 1958 as OWAA's top conservation award. Although only OWAA members are eligible, it is not actually presented by the organization, but by past award winners, who are known as the Circle of Chiefs. Only these members of the Circle can nominate a new member and can vote. The Circle is recognized as the OWAA's conservation conscience and policy spokesman. In announcing this year's award, past recipient **Michael Furtman** cited Tompkins' "dogged determination to educate the public on the conservation and environmental challenges, losses and victories. It is in his blood. He could no more NOT care about nature than he could stop breathing. Such determination has in many cases meant he was less than popular with his editors or supervisors – speaking the truth can sometimes do that." Furtman went on to say, "Far from a hook-and-bullet writer (which [Tompkins] also does with great aplomb), he covers natural resources like no one else in the state, and few in the nation."

## **J. HAMMOND BROWN MEMORIAL AWARD**

**Phil Bloom**, of Fort Wayne, Ind., received the 2013 J. Hammond Brown Award. The award is OWAA's most prestigious recognition of a member "for devoted past service to the organization over a period of continuous years." In presenting the award to Bloom, past recipient **Rich Patterson** said: "Some board work is visible, especially at conferences, but many tasks must be completed at home. Sometimes they are difficult. On a couple of occasions Phil stepped in to prevent what could have become significant organizational problems. "Back in 2006 my wife and I had packed our car and were ready to head for Bismarck, N.D., where I'd end my year as president. It had been a snowy winter followed by a rainy spring ... The Corps of Engineers told the residents of Cedar Rapids not to worry. Then seven inches of torrential rain fell in a couple of hours. The river surged 13 feet higher than ever recorded ... We still thought we could make the OWAA conference. Then one bridge went out. Then another and another. Finally only one bridge remained and the National Guard only let emergency vehicles cross the river. We couldn't leave town. We weren't going to the OWAA conference. I called Phil and told him I was in a bind. 'No problem, Rich. I'll handle it. Do what you can to help flood victims.' So, with almost no notice Phil did my jobs, and then a year later in his year as president he did it all again."

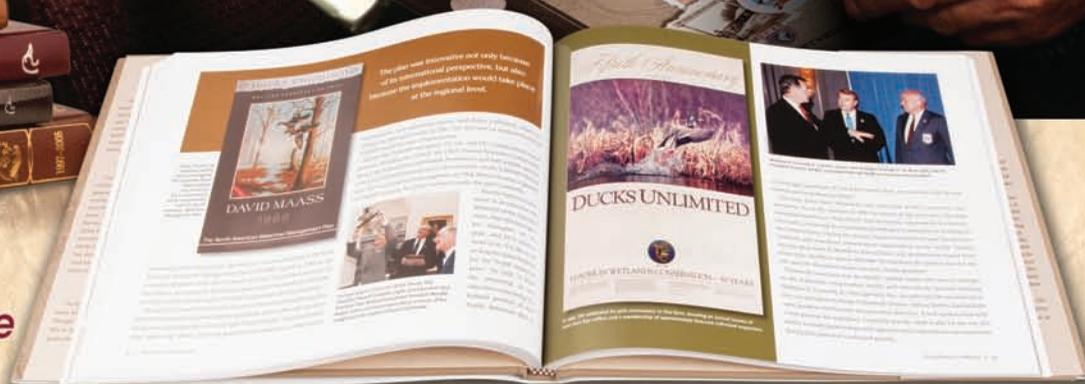
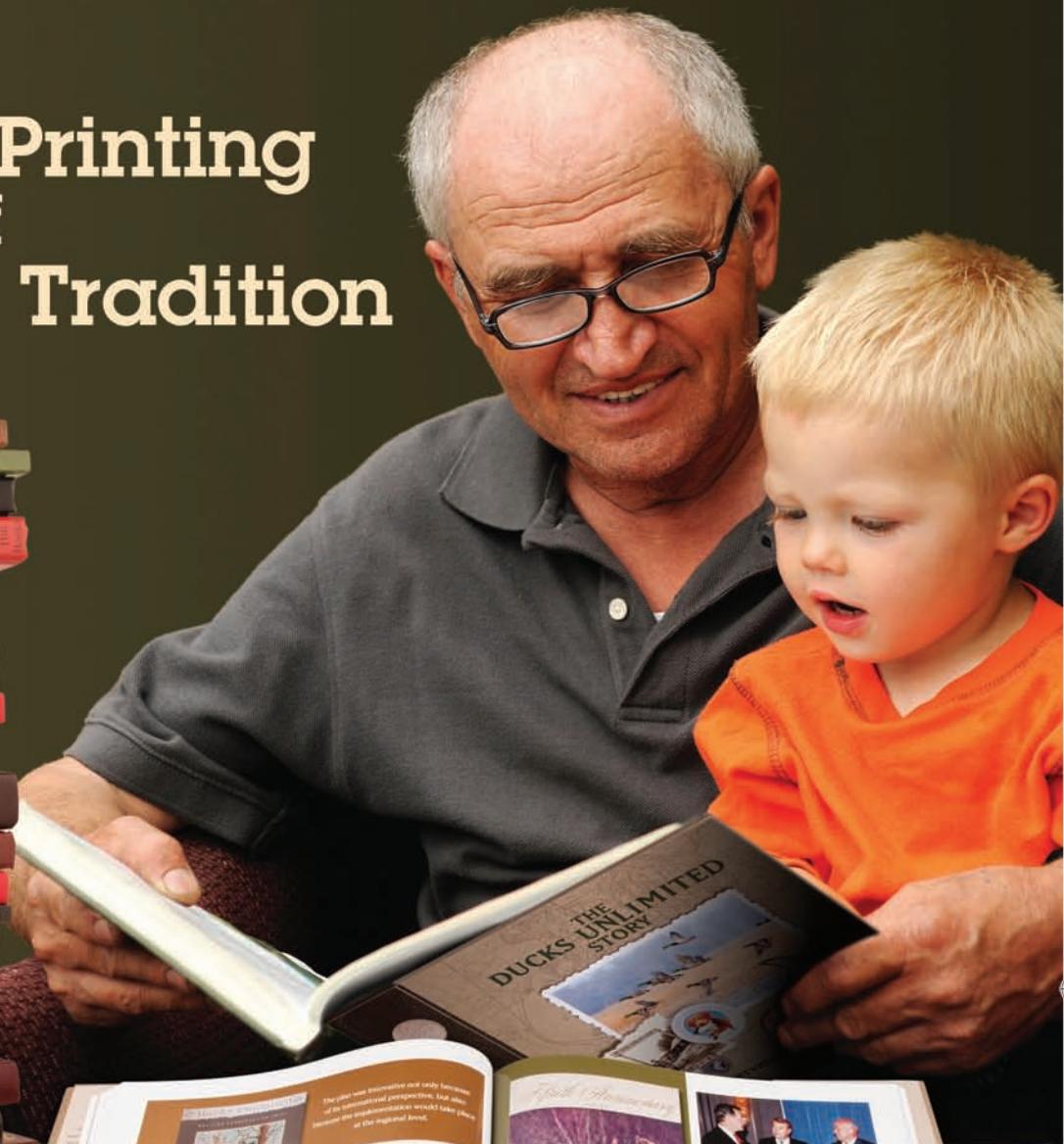
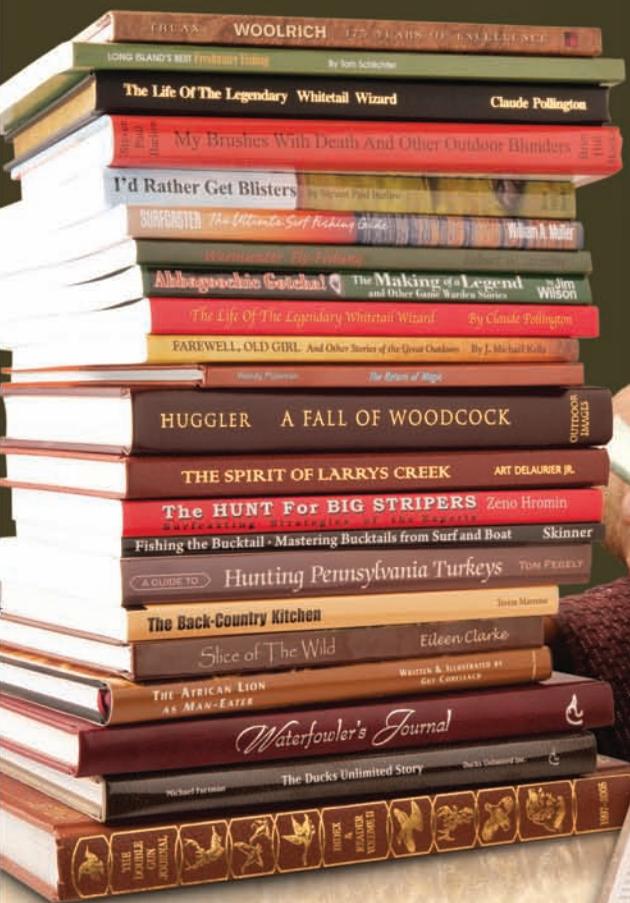
## **EXCELLENCE IN CRAFT AWARD**

**Glenn Sapir**, of Putnam Valley, N.Y., received OWAA's 2013 Excellence in Craft Award. The award honors an OWAA member "for outstanding effort in upholding the OWAA Creed and continued excellence in craft." An OWAA member since 1975, Sapir is director of editorial services for the **National Shooting Sports Foundation**, a post he has held for the past 10 years. He directs, edits and writes articles on a regular basis for trade, association and consumer magazines, and he writes and edits NSSF's monthly electronic Member News and The Range Report, as well as its quarterly First Shot News and its Annual Review. Sapir previously worked in editor positions for Outdoor Life, Sports Afield, and Field and Stream. When he joined the staff at Field and Stream, Sapir was one of only three to have served as editor on all the famous "Big Three." From there, he left to form Ashmark Communications before eventually joining the team at NSSF. He is a past president of OWAA, was twice elected by his peers as Outstanding Board Member and also received the association's great J. Hammond Brown Award, and is a several-times national writing and photography winner.

## **OUTSTANDING BOARD MEMBER AWARD**

**Paul Queneau**, of Missoula, Mont., received the 2013 Outstanding Board Member Award. A member since 2007, he is conservation editor for the **Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation's** Bugle Magazine. Aside from being active on several committees before and now as a member of OWAA's board, Queneau has been instrumental in the growing success of Off the Record, an informal monthly gathering of outdoor media individuals from across western Montana. His energy and devotion to the association has also proved beneficial in the founding of a student chapter of OWAA at the University of Montana in Missoula. "He listens to others and then is thoughtful about what he says about issues," said **Bill Graham**, president of the OWAA board of directors. "He's willing to tackle chores that take up his spare time. One of the best and brightest board members I've ever worked with, and a great guy."

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December 2013/January 2014



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Visit: [www.owaa.org/ou/category/departments/table-of-contents](http://www.owaa.org/ou/category/departments/table-of-contents).

## YOUR OWAA END-OF-YEAR CHECKLIST

**OWAA office closed Dec. 23-Jan. 1.**

In observance of the Christmas and New Years' holidays, the OWAA office will be closed Dec. 23, 2013, through Jan. 1, 2014. Headquarters will reopen on Jan. 2, 2014.

**Questions about EIC contests? Call today!**

If you have questions on your EIC submissions, we urge you to call or email OWAA headquarters prior to Dec. 23, otherwise we'll not be able to address your concerns until our offices re-open on Jan. 2.

**Renew dues**

Your annual dues are due to the OWAA office by Jan. 10, 2014, to avoid a disruption in your membership — you can pay online at [www.owaa.org/store](http://www.owaa.org/store), or mail your payment to 615 Oak St., Ste 201, Missoula, MT 59801.

