

OUTDOORS UNLIMITED

OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

THE VOICE OF THE OUTDOORS

JUNE/JULY 2019

LITTLE ROCK

'The Natural State'
rolls out red carpet
for OWAA | **p. 6**



Arkansas water trails
a step back in time
AND MORE.

OUTDOORS UNLIMITED

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ON THE COVER

BY JEFF WILLIAMS | *A fly angler wades in ankle-deep water on a typical June day on the lower Buffalo River in Arkansas, site of this year's OWAA conference.*

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Connecting at conference

My first OWAA conference was in 1991 at Niagara Falls, New York.

Sylvia Bashline, then the executive director, encouraged me to attend, even though my membership application had yet to be approved.

I was clueless about OWAA and its annual gathering, but I was eager to see if there was a place for me. The answer came in a parking lot encounter during Breakout Day on Wednesday, the middle day of what was then a five-day conference.

Still unsure of myself after visiting a few of the Breakout Day vendors, I was walking toward the bus pickup area to catch a ride back to the headquarters hotel when a car pulled up with a driver and two passengers.

The only person I recognized was John Husar and that only because he and I had covered Notre Dame football at one time for our respective newspapers, the Chicago Tribune and Fort Wayne Journal Gazette.

The driver asked a few oddball questions before saying, "Are you hungry?"

Of course I was hungry, which is why I was heading to the hotel, probably to order room service and eat alone.

"Yes," I said to the driver.

"Hop in," he said.

And I did, which is when the driver introduced himself as Bob Marshall of the New Orleans Times-Picayune. Husar was in the front passenger seat, and the third guy in the back turned out to be Tom Wharton of the Salt Lake Tribune.

Feeling a bit more at ease while settling into the back seat, I became suspicious as Marshall took us on a meandering drive that led into Canada and eventually to a restaurant in Niagara-On-The-Lake. The food was great, the conversation lively, and I felt as if I'd made some new friends.

Little did I know how those friendships would develop over the years.

Was I ever lucky to be crossing that

parking lot on the afternoon of June 3, 1991!

The Niagara Falls conference also introduced me to how prickly things can get in OWAA.

The first newsmaker panel of the conference ("Do Animals Have Rights?") was a debate between Walter Howard, a biology professor from the University of California-Davis, and Wayne Pacelle, then the national director of Fund for Animals.

Some members thought it unconscionable for OWAA to allow an animal rights activist and avowed anti-hunter in our midst. Others saw it as rich story material. Howard and Pacelle went toe-to-toe on the stage that day. I don't remember much of what was said, other than Howard's line "Mother Nature is a cruel b----." Hint: It rhymed with rich.

I attended Tom Carney's craft improvement session on smoother prose and one by the legendary John Madson on writing better leads. Another newsmaker panel discussed the plight of the northern spotted owl, which two years later prompted me to do a pre-conference trip into a national forest in Oregon to look for the endangered bird.

It was at this conference where the Newspaper Section was formed, and I heard the OWAA prayer for the first time, recited eloquently at the closing night banquet by John McCoy, who became one of my best friends in OWAA.

As we head toward our 2019 meeting in Little Rock, Arkansas, in a few weeks, fond memories of my first conference and a couple dozen since are fresh in my mind.

What memories will you make at this year's conference? Come and find out.

— Phil Bloom is OWAA's interim executive director. Reach him at pbloom@owaa.org or 406-552-4049.



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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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A Collective Thirst for Breakfast Antipathy



OWAA President Paul Queneau is conservation editor of Bugle magazine at the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

Paul Queneau
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Two perfect plates of bacon, eggs and French toast sat before me and my good friend Matt, both of us voracious 20-somethings stunned to find ourselves unable to fit any food around the nervous pits in our stomachs.

It was August 2000. The day prior we'd hitched our way to Durango, Colorado, from Wolf Creek Pass, having left my truck where the Continental Divide Trail (CDT) crosses U.S. 160.

We had a fitful night at a cheap hotel and clearly couldn't hide our unease about the trek before us. The realization we were in the same boat gave way to laughter.

Ever since then we've held firm that the greatest adventures begin by being daunted to the point of breakfast antipathy.

Our fear was ascribed to the fact 80 of the 100 miles of trail before us hovered above 12,000 feet in the Weminuche Wilderness. The CDT guidebook said it might be the hairiest section of the entire 3,000-mile trail due to frequent lightning, altitude, and a maze of false trails and boulder fields above timberline.

But we gathered our wits, grabbed our packs, and caught the bus to Silverton, where a Jeep tour company would shuttle us to the Stony Pass trailhead. Unfortunately the old bus overheated repeatedly as it tried to climb Molas Pass, putting us an hour behind. Luckily, the Jeep shuttle waited for us, and we finally hit the trail at high noon. I'll be forever grateful the mountain gods took pity on us that day. It was the only afternoon of the trip where the sky wasn't a steady traffic jam of thunderheads.

From then on, we force-fed on hideous freeze-dried granola by headlamp every morning and broke camp in the dark. By the time the first rays of sunlight hit the high ridges, we were there to meet them. The cerulean sky sprouted tiny puffs at 9 a.m., growing vertically before mushrooming around 10 and then bruising black at their bases. By 11, we were descending to an alpine lake or lower pass to make camp and take refuge. We'd spend our afternoons cowering in our tent as lightning raked the pinnacles around us.

Thunder has a more soul-shaking timbre when you're perched at eye-level with the source.

Spring forward to a few months ago when I awoke early in an Airbnb in Orem, Utah, and was surprised to find I again had a slight resistance to breakfast. My sons Jackson and Liam, ages 13 and 15, were still fast asleep. But our new pup Harper, a 10-month-old Husky-Lab cross we got from a shelter in January, was wide awake and ready to roll.

Our Spring Break destination was Escalante National Monument. Our plan was to backpack the main canyon from where its namesake river crosses Highway 12, then back to town. Our path was reputed to be a "spotty trail with at least 40 river crossings," which in late March might be swollen with frigid snowmelt. We had no idea how our feet would fair carrying packs all day in neoprene socks and sandals, or if our dog would even willingly carry a pack, avoid the cactus, cross the icy river, or sleep beside me in a tent. So, yes, I was a hair nervous.

Once my boys awoke, I proceeded to shatter a drinking glass as I hurriedly washed our dishes in the sink. Four stitches in my right index finger later, we were back on the road to Escalante.

The weather proved sublime, and so did Harper, who turned out to be a willing pack mule and river rat. Most importantly, my sons seemed to love every minute of it, even after Liam sprained his ankle and face-planted on the riverbank the last day. We all made it out under our own power and laid an epic spring break escapade to rest.

My hunch is OWAA members across every one of our 90-plus years know the divine terror on the cusp of adventure. We gather every summer at our annual conference to sharpen our skills, share stories, and revel in the fact we've somehow found a way to make a living doing it. What better spot than Little Rock, Arkansas, this June to swap tales and make new friends.

Hope to see you there and to hear your stories, too.

Madson Fellowships Awarded

3 members receive funds for skill-building workshops, conference



ASHLEY STIMPSON

Ashley Stimpson is a Baltimore-based travel and outdoors writer who most often writes about Mid-Atlantic adventures by paddle, foot, or fins. Her features have been published in Chesapeake Bay Magazine, Baltimore Style, and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources magazine - Maryland Natural Resources.

Her literary nonfiction has appeared or is forthcoming in Camas, Split Rock Review, and Driftless Magazine. A Midwesterner by birth, Stimpson believes all landscapes (even the dusty, flat ones) and the wilderness they encompass are worthy of respect and awe. She writes to inspire curiosity and a greater sense of belonging in her readers. A new OWAA member, Stimpson plans to use her \$1,600 Madson Fellowship to attend OWAA's conference in Little Rock Arkansas, June 22-24.



COLLEEN MINIUK

Colleen Miniuk left a career in the corporate world in 2007 to pursue a freelance photography career. An Arizona-based photographer and writer, she shifted exclusively into outdoor photography in 2010 after attending the OWAA conference in Rochester, Minnesota.

Her photo credentials include National Geographic calendars, Arizona Highways, AAA Via, National Parks Traveler, and On Landscape. She has authored and self-published two photography guidebooks and leads photography workshops, including women's photography retreats called Sheography.

Miniuk plans to use her \$1,000 Madson Fellowship to attend the Fish-trap Outpost writing workshop with renowned author Craig Childs on the Snake River in September.



PAUL PRESSON

Paul Presson is a Special Operations, Desert Storm military veteran of 15 years. After leaving the service, he pursued an aeronautics degree at Embry Riddle University and began a successful career in logistics management.

A military injury prevented him from working full time. An avid kayak angler and nature lover, he was no longer able to kayak fish, so he turned to writing about his past adventures. Since then, Presson has been published nationally and internationally. His writing has morphed into cartooning and photography. He also works with a non-profit disabled veterans' group that helps veterans go fishing.

He will use his \$400 Madson stipend to enroll in a digital photography class at St. Petersburg College in Florida.

Ballard, Lowrey, Stone added to board

Jack Ballard, Nick Lowrey, and Emily Stone have been elected to seats on OWAA's board of directors. Their three-year terms begin at the June 24 board meeting during the summer conference in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Ballard, a 21-year-member of OWAA, has two previous terms on the board and one as OWAA's treasurer. He currently serves as an Endowment Trustee for the organization.

Ballard lives in Red Lodge, Montana, and has attended 15 conferences. He has had hundreds of articles published in more than 50 magazines or other publications, and has more than 1,000 photos featured in books, calendars, magazines and other media.

Lowrey is managing editor of the Capital Journal newspaper in Pierre, South Dakota, and serves as editor of the newspaper's magazine, South Dakota Outdoors. His outdoor writing has appeared in newspapers all over South Dakota and in regional magazines.

Stone is the naturalist/education director at the Cable (Wisconsin) Natural History Museum. She writes Natural Connections, a popular column published in more than 20 local and regional newspapers. She also produces a podcast by the same name, and recently published her second book - "Natural Connections: Dreaming of an Elfin Skimmer."

Little Rock offers easy access to nature

YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO FAR to find nature in Little Rock, site of this year's OWAA annual conference.

Right outside the back door of the headquarters hotel – DoubleTree by Hilton – is the Arkansas River Trail that offers 17 miles of paved pathways, including five pedestrian and bicycle bridges that connect the north and south banks of the river.

Along the way is the William E. “Bill” Clark Presidential Park Wetlands.

Adjacent to the Clinton Presidential Library, the 13-acre restored wetland is designed to showcase wildlife and river life. It is a collaborative effort of several

entities, including the City of Little Rock, the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission, and the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission.

Its namesake, Bill Clark (1943-2007), was an avid outdoorsman and a business, civic, charitable, and political leader in Arkansas for more than 30 years. A half-mile-long boardwalk loops around the wetlands, which pay tribute to Clark's love of the outdoors as an avid hunter and angler.

Bearing the nickname “The Natural State,” Arkansas has plenty of other outdoor opportunities. Conference attendees can find explore an array of options through pre- and post-conference trips.

There's a chance to catch high-quality smallmouth bass on the Buffalo National River, mountain biking on the professionally designed Oz Trails network, snorkeling with experts to locate endangered freshwater mussels in the Saline River, rock climbing Jamestown Crag or Rattlesnake Ridge, or banding and releasing hummingbirds at the Potlatch Conservation Education Center.

Check out all of the organized pre/post trips at <https://owaa.org/2019conference/pre-post-conference-trips/>, where you also will find a dozen do-it-yourself options, including Mammoth Spring, one of the world's largest springs and home to Mammoth Spring National Fish Hatchery.



Thank you to our excellence in craft contest judges

OWAA's annual Excellence In Craft is a massive undertaking that requires dozens of volunteer judges to evaluate and score each entry. This year, 67 volunteers judged 726 entries to determine the best-of-the-best in our chosen profession.

A huge OWAA thank you to the following:

BLOG: Tony Dolle*, Bob Bramblet, Matt Harlow, Crystal Ross, Dan Small, Kim Thornton, Mike Zlotnicki

BOOKS: Paula DelGiudice*, Chris Hunt, David Kinney, Mark Taylor

COLUMN: Mark Taylor*, Karen Loke, Laura Lundquist, Ron Steffe

ILLUSTRATION/GRAPHIC: Colleen Miniuk*, Jana Bloom, Lindsay Brown, Blair Jones

MAGAZINE: Brad Isles*, Phil Bloom, Heide Brandes, Alan Clemons, Tony Dolle, Holly Endersby, Sandra Kelly, Bill Monroe, Christine Peterson, Russell Roe, Carrie Cousins

Spiller, Mark Taylor, Jenny Weiss

NEWSPAPER: Ty Stockton*, Joe Albanese, Phil Bloom, Bill Graham, Kerry Hecker, Micah Holmes, Ellen Horowitz, John Hudson, Jodi Applegate Stemler, Tom Wharton, Drew YoungeDyke

PHOTOGRAPHY: Sam Dean*, Robert Annis, Bryan Cereijo, Mark Gocke, Doug McSchooler, John Maxwell, Martin Perea, Jay Snyder, Mark Taylor

PHOTOGRAPHY ESSAY: Sam Dean*, Seth Gitner, Kyle Green, Mark Taylor

RADIO/PODCAST: Brian Geiger*, Kelly Adams, Tristina Bickford, Mark Freeman, Grant McOmie, Amber Nabors, Trey Reid, Nicola Whitley, Jenifer Wisniewski

TV/VIDEO/WEBCAST: Lisa Ballard*, Chris Batin, Don Cash, Walter Dinkins, Brent Drinkut, Michael Greggans, Joe Hosmer, Brian Jennings, Carol Lynde, Tim Smith

*Denotes chief judge

A half-mile boardwalk loops around the Bill Clark Presidential Park Wetlands in downtown Little Rock, just a few blocks from the conference host hotel.



Making Wakes in the Big Woods

Jim Harris follows trail markers that keep paddlers on the right track through a maze of trees in the Bayou DeView Water Trail in Arkansas. Photo by Jeff Williams / Arkansas Wildlife

Arkansas Water Trails like 'stepping back in time'

BY JEFF WILLIAMS | LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

A FEW BOATLOADS OF DUCK HUNTERS whooshed by as we unloaded kayaks, a canoe and gear from our truck on an unusually bright and warm day last January.

I don't know if the hunters were successful that morning – water was a bit high. We watched long strands of geese above the Arkansas Delta during our drive to Lake Hickson in northern Monroe County about 60 miles east of Little Rock, but ducks were scarce.

Two sit-on-top kayaks and a solo canoe would take the three of us off the lake and onto Bayou DeView Water Trail, a 15-mile path that snakes through Sheffield Nelson Dagmar Wildlife Management Area.

A water trail is like a hiking trail but sometimes with less room for error. Hiking trails often include bright markers set strategically among trees, although most are easy to follow anyway because they are, well, trails; even without markers,

the path usually is clear. But it's not as clear among the tupelo and cypress giants sprouting from shallow water. As soon as a boat's wake disappears, so does the path. Without the bright blue markers – put in place along Bayou DeView by volunteers during high water – disorientation would set in quickly. Out here, the landscape is deceptively similar in every direction. Even though we're just a few miles from an interstate highway, we're in the middle of nowhere. It's not a place familiar to or expected by every paddler.

"I've had friends and family come from out of town and they're blown away," said Kirsten Bartlow, watchable wildlife coordinator at the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission, paddling a canoe on this trip. "It feels like you're stepping back in time. It's got huge old trees, wildlife and it's different each season."

We picked the right day. Winter can be brutal in these wetlands, especially when water is up and wind whips through the bare trees. Likewise, summer can roast paddlers and pester them with mosquitoes.

We packed snacks, drinking water, life jackets, and map



Trees in various stages of growth - or demise - take on all shapes.

and compass (as well as GPS); we were outfitted with all we'd need and all that was required. By Arkansas law, paddlers 12 and younger must wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket at all times on the water; those older than 12 must have one in the boat, ready to use. Even though we're well past 12, we wore ours. Cooler lids must be securely fastened and each boat must include an attached trash container. Floating holders are required for beverages in aluminum cans or plastic bottles; glass containers are strictly forbidden.

"The nice thing about flat-water paddling is you don't need a shuttle – there are fewer logistics," Bartlow said. "It's also a good way for beginners to learn without fear of whitewater, although precautions need to be taken because a submerged stump or (cypress) knee can flip a boat."

Arkansas is known for its sparkling, swift float streams but flat-water paddling like this can be just as exciting, complete with mishaps. A soggy tumble can happen to anyone, no matter the skill level, usually when it's least expected. We each carried a change of clothes in dry bags just in case, although finding dry land to make changing easy would have been almost impossible.

We pushed off, found the trail markers at the southeastern end of the small lake and pointed our boats into the trees. Two of us had been here before, but for paddlers new to flat-water trips in wetlands crowded with trees, this is a good time to

get in the habit of training an eye on the next trail marker.

The spur covers almost a mile to the main trail and is typical of conditions and scenery found along water trails in this part of the state. In other words, it's stunning.

"I was in awe of the trees," said Jim Harris, managing editor of Arkansas Wildlife magazine, who was adding to his paddling résumé with a wetlands float. "Some of them were hollowed out. One looked like a Gothic church with cypress

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SEASON.**

knees, which always reminded me of monks with their hands in prayer."

A relatively large pool that offers a rare view of the open sky lies at the junction of the spur and the main trail. A left turn sends paddlers upstream on Bayou DeView, toward the Benson Creek Access, 5.7 miles away under Arkansas Highway 17. A right leads to about 8 miles of downstream trail to the Bank of Brinkley Access (barely upstream of the Cache River confluence), past the Rock Island Road and Apple Lake accesses, and through a chunk of the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge.

"The character of this place changes with the season and water levels," Bartlow said. "When the water is lower, you get to see more of the knees around the cypress trees. When the water is higher, you can explore off the trail, as long as you keep a sense of direction."

On this day, we were surrounded by

water deep into the trees in all directions.

"I thought Bayou DeView would be just that – like a bayou," Harris said. "I had no idea it would be a large expanse of water. I was surprised it wasn't a channel like a typical bayou."

The Lake Hickson spur was practically calm. We didn't notice any flow until we made the turn upstream on Bayou DeView and saw water breaking around tree trunks. It wasn't enough current to make paddling difficult, but the boat didn't glide as easily. The cypresses and tupelos were astounding, and we began to notice woodpeckers swooping among the trees and hammering for insects.

"If you want to see woodpeckers, go to the Big Woods," Bartlow said. "I've paddled up on sleeping otters on a submerged log, I've seen pairs of bald eagles come back year after year to their nesting areas, great blue heron rookeries, migratory waterfowl in winter and, of course, migratory songbirds each spring and summer"

We took a close look at a beaver lodge about 50 yards off the trail, with cypress knees shooting through intertwined branches. It showed signs of recent use, although we didn't see its occupants.

We didn't see anyone else paddling, either. We enjoyed the solitude on our out-and-back excursion, but it's simply a matter of time before these trails receive more use – they're too attractive for paddlers to ignore.

"It was a spectacular day with the sun cutting through the trees – and it was quiet," Harris said. "If you're someone who hasn't done this, and you like the outdoors, just do it."

TRAIL INFO

Bayou DeView Water Trail is one of many Arkansas Water Trails across the state, and more are on the way. Visit agfc.com, click on "Explore Outdoors" and "Wildlife Viewing Opportunities" to discover information about all the trails. Download a free app with a geo-referenced map that uses your smartphone's GPS to keep track of your location on Bayou DeView, even without cellular service.

The above article is reprinted with permission from the March/April 2019 issue of Arkansas Wildlife, the magazine of the Arkansas Fish & Game Commission.

LAST-MINUTE MEMO for Little Rock

IF YOU ARE ATTENDING OWAA'S CONFERENCE June 22-24 in Little Rock, Arkansas, here are some helpful reminders:

Q Anything special I should pack?

A If you would like to participate in our Photo Scavenger Hunt, you must bring your own camera and camera card. Also bring any clips you would like to share with our editors at the Meet the Editors Panel – a clip box will be available for each attending editor. Of course, be sure to bring plenty of business cards for networking!

Q What should I wear?

A Wear comfortable shoes and casual clothes to the welcome dinner, EIC awards party, workshops and all demo events. The Honorary Awards Dinner on Monday night is more formal; a tie and sports jacket, dress or skirt are recommended. While all conference sessions will be inside, Field Skills Day will be outside, so please be prepared for various weather conditions.

Q Where do I go when I arrive in Little Rock?

A The DoubleTree by Hilton Little Rock is the host hotel for conference attendees. Check-in is available beginning at 3 p.m. and reduced-rate parking is available for OWAA guests. The conference registration desk will be on the hotel's second floor. Except for Demo Day and Field Skills Day, conference activities will be at the hotel and the attached Robinson Center. We encourage attendees arriving on Friday to pick up their badges, program and check-in materials at the registration desk before 8 p.m.

Q Will I need to transport myself to any conference activities?

A No. All transportation for conference activities is provided. Driving directions will be available at the registration desk if you would prefer to drive yourself. Please note: Supporting Group representatives will need to provide their own transportation for Demo Day and Field Skills Day if they need to transport materials and/or arrive early for setup.

Q Are my meals included with my registration?

A Yes. Scheduled conference meals are included in your registration fee and available beginning with breakfast on Saturday and ending with dinner on Monday. Please wear your conference badge to all meal events and contact OWAA HQ (conference@owaa.org) if you have any dietary restrictions. For meals before and after conference, plenty of great restaurants are available in Little Rock: <https://littlerockmeetings.com/big-savings>.

ARRIVE EARLY FOR THESE FRIDAY ACTIVITIES:

REGISTRATION

1 – 8 p.m., DoubleTree by Hilton Little Rock

Beat the rush and check-in Friday. Your badge, the conference program, digital press material and more are available at the registration desk on the second floor.

BECOMING AN OUTDOOR COMMUNICATOR

3 – 6 p.m. Porter Room, Robinson Center

This free, three-hour workshop will feature some of OWAA's best-known communicators giving presentations about their specialties from outdoor publishing to outdoor television shows and everything in between. Join Pat Wray and fellow OWAA members for this popular staple of the OWAA conference. Speaker presentations will be followed by an informal Q&A reception.

GREEN RIBBON MEETING

6 – 6:30 p.m. Porter Room, Robinson Center

First-time at an OWAA conference? Haven't been in a while? Join program chair Tim Mead and conference planner Jessica Seitz, who will explain the ins and outs of the conference and what the "can't miss" events are. Meet other OWAA members happy to act as mentors to help you navigate your first conference.

PRESIDENT'S HOSPITALITY

8:30 – 11:30 p.m., DoubleTree by Hilton Little Rock

Come celebrate and help toast OWAA President Paul Queneau for his service over the past year.

For even more fun, check out our lineup of pre- and post-conference activities at <http://owaa.org/2019conference/pre-post-conference-trips/>

Q Can my spouse and family attend with me?

A Absolutely! A list of things to do in Little Rock and family and guest activities are available on the conference website: <http://owaa.org/2019conference/agenda/spouses-partners-families-guests/>. Any family or guests registered for the conference are welcome to join you for all conference meals and activities.

For more FAQs, visit: <http://owaa.org/2019conference/faq/>.

Telling stories makes the perfect TV show

BY RON SCHARA

| GOLDEN VALLEY, MINNESOTA

IF YOU'RE AN OUTDOOR TV STAR/HOST, have you ever thought about sending a thank you to every viewer for all the boring shows you've sent into their living room TV sets?

Ditto for TV producers, videographers, editors and the like.

I've often wished I could. It would be a nice gesture.

After two decades in the outdoor television show business, I've had my share of TV "wishes." Wish I could do that stand-up again? Wish I could write that script again? Wish I'd changed that godawful music or that jump cut. Wish I'd cut that boring babble in a fishing boat that was supposed to be funny but wasn't.

My greatest wish? To create the perfect outdoor show on television. Yeah, well, that's great. We all know it ain't happening. Too many moving parts in a TV production. So get over it.

But wait! It's the quest for perfection that really matters. Can we write better scripts? Can we make better video decisions, edits, and so forth?

The answer is yes, of course.

So...do you do that? Do you occasionally gather a few viewers and ask them to watch and respond? Do you sit down with your production team and watch your final product and praise or critique?

Everybody wears thick skins, right? It's imperative to constantly look with a critical eye at what you're putting on the air.

That's the right thing to do, but I don't see much evidence on the outdoor shows on my cable networks. Hey, fishing shows. A question: How many bass do you want me to watch you catch in 22 minutes of video? Sometimes you have a new bass on the line, but I never saw you unhook the first one.

Fishing shows should be informative, right? Me, the sad hooker, wants to watch

you, the happy hooker, so I can be like you, right? You kindly tell your viewers what you're using for bait to catch six bass a minute. But do I ever get to see a close up shot of this magical lure? Nah. Cameraman sleeping? We have a saying at Ron Schara Productions: If the camera doesn't see it, it didn't happen.

Am I picking on fishing shows? Yes, but I could pick on hunting shows for the same boring episodes that mostly begin with whispering in a tree somewhere and ending with the host/hunter kneeling by the humongous buck telling me what I just watched.

I yell at my TV screen: "Don't tell me the buck came in from the right and sniffed something and you grunted and the buck stopped and you flew an arrow at 5 yards. I JUST WATCHED YOU AND THE DEER!"

Tell me something different. Tell me how you feel? Tell me why you picked this spot to hunt (I should have heard that earlier in the show.) Tell me what a wonderful animal is the white-tailed deer? Tell me something I haven't already seen you do? Get it?

Okay, enough. I'm getting cranky.

Outdoor television shows have many wonderful attributes. They take us to places we've never been and likely never will. They show us moments in the boat or on the hunt that must be seen to be appreciated. You don't have to convince me that outdoor television shows, good or lousy, serve some purpose.

But we all want to be better outdoor television communicators, right?

Did somebody mention script writing? Yeah, I did. Every story we produce at Ron Schara Productions starts with story idea, shooting, logging and finishes with a script. The script is voice tracked and then goes to the assigned video editor.

But a script takes time. A fishing show is just cast, catch and release and do it all again. Who needs a script? The answer –

all TV shows. A script makes a story flow, a script not only guides an editor but also keeps the editor on task.

Frankly, the perfect TV show is all about the story. Do you see many hunting shows that tell stories? Seldom. The story line is mostly limited to watching the host shoot something. There is seldom a beginning – the who, what, where and why. The endings are always the same – something's dead.

Did somebody say "story?" Yes, I did.

The best TV programs are stories with a beginning, middle and end. Viewers love stories. We grew up with mom at the bedside saying, "Once upon a time ..."

A producer at ESPN once told me about a different way to start a good outdoor story.

"Start with the game," he said.

In other words, the story begins with the leaping giant fish or the big ol' bull elk about to step into view and ... and then segue back to how you got there and who is there and eventually return to the fish fight or the big bull.

Dick Disney, my old journalism professor at Iowa State, once reminded me that people are interested in people. In other words, if you have writer's block about starting a story, you can never go wrong if it begins with people.

So, what keeps you glued to the TV set?

"Today on Let's Go Fishing, we're headed to south Texas to see if the bass are biting ..."

Or

"Today on Let's Go Fishing, Billy Bob is fixing to set a bass fishing record or die casting ..."

I'll watch Billy Bob. If he follows a script.

— Ron Schara is the award-winning host and producer of several outdoor television shows, including "Backroads with Ron and Raven" and "Minnesota Bound" that thrive on telling great stories.

Snitching On My Niche

BY ALEX ZIDOCK | TAFTON, PENNSYLVANIA

ORIGINALLY, I TRIED A STANDARD APPROACH to produce a regional “hook and buller” outdoors television show.

I went to the cable company that provided service in our area and purchased a weekly 30-minute time block on its local channel. I contracted with enough local advertisers to cover costs and have a few dollars left over for me.

I did not shoot or edit video, so I relied on others to follow me around the woods and waters to tape material. I spent days sitting at their side directing the editing. It was time consuming and took me away from other writing and photography assignments.

After a year with this format, I wasn't making enough money for the hours I was putting in, so I changed my approach and found a niche.

I worked out a partnership with the cable company where I would totally produce a 30-minute show and allow them to sell most of the advertising. All they had to do was provide the airtime and a videographer for a couple hours a week at a specific location. The videographer would also edit the show.

They agreed to try it. The cable company supplies the videographer/editor, all the equipment, the airtime, and sells six minutes of advertising.

That was 21 years ago. We're still going strong, and it's paying off.

Here's how it works. Instead of producing a show where we took 30 minutes (minus commercials, etc.) to kill a bear or a deer, or catch a few fish, I brought guests to a designated location for personality interviews, how-to segments, or other outdoors topics.

Our show reaches about 140,000 households in several counties of northeastern Pennsylvania where there are hundreds of interesting outdoor folks. Many are regional or statewide notables. Some are known nationally. So, we have a tremendous pool of guests to choose from right in our viewing audience. And we need them since we do about 50 different shows each year.

It's amazing once you get the ball rolling how many people contact you about interesting topics or lead you to other interesting people.

Tuesday night is an off night for most bar/restaurants, so in looking for a venue I approached a local brew pub to hire us, and pay us, as their “Tuesday night band,” just like they hire entertainment on Friday and Saturday evenings. It's a no-brainer since they benefit from the exposure of having a TV show taped in their establishment each week.

The first brewpub owner said he would hire us for 13 weeks. He kept us for 15 months. We were at the next location for 10 years and might still be there if the owner hadn't died.

It takes about 8 hours a week to produce and host the show. It takes only a few hours a week to do research, make phone calls, and line up “guests.”

My wife, JoAnne, and I show up in our “Out in the Open”



Alex and JoAnne as they appeared several years ago on stage at the Tannersville Inn where they were hired as the “Tuesday night band” for more than 10 years. *Courtesy photo.*

embroidered shirts and bring a table, table cover, and two chairs. The videographer/editor totes in two lights, a camera and tripod. Guests bring props – photos or books they've written. They tie flies, demonstrate skills or talk about what they do in the outdoors.

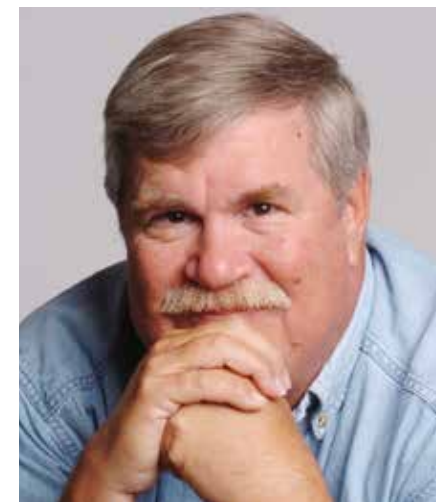
The format is simple. After a 15-second “tease,” JoAnne and I open the show with two minutes of banter about what hunting/fishing seasons are current, or about our guest or anything else we think will keep viewers interested. It takes about an hour to tape the show. Done!

After taping, the show is edited Wednesday and early Thursday and airs at 9:30 p.m. Thursday.

With so many years on local television we've become well known. And while it's not national exposure, we are big fish in a little pond, making money. It's our niche.

— Alex Zidock has been an OWAA member since 1975. His regional cable TV special “Out in the Open” (www.outintheopen.com) airs on Blue Ridge Communications TV 13 in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Find a writing style that works



BRENT FRAZEE

BY BRENT FRAZEE |
PARKVILLE, MISSOURI

I’LL NEVER FORGET THE DAY I inadvertently discovered my writing style.

I was assistant sports editor for the Racine (Wisconsin) Journal-Times, and I was called to “put out a fire.” Sport fishing on Lake Michigan was just starting to boom, but our newspaper hadn't written one word about it yet. The public and the charter captains were mad, and the editors at our newspaper knew we had to do something about it.

So, they asked if anyone on our sports staff had an interest in fishing and hunting. I was the only one who raised my hand, so I got the job.

Soon I was on a charter boat, bouncing around on Lake Michigan with a gruff captain and his mate, trolling for salmon.

It was a totally different world for me, far from the ball sports I was accustomed to covering.

I was an avid bass fisherman, but I had never experienced big-water fishing. Everything from the big lures to the attractors to the big king salmon we caught were new to me, and I was excited.

The captain was a colorful guy with quite a varied past. We caught lots of fish that day, and they put on a good show as

we reeled them in.

I was excited as I returned from that fishing trip, eager to relate what had happened.

I could handle the story two ways. I could do a first-person “hero” story on how I had caught all these fish. Or I could do a personality sketch on this colorful charter-boat captain, get heavy into description of what went on, and tell the story of Lake Michigan's fish and leave myself out of the story.

I chose the latter, and on that day, I developed a writing style.

My goal at all times is to get the reader to feel like they are along with me on that trip. I want to highlight some of the interesting critters I run across, not myself.

I guess I just don't look at myself as that interesting, at least not compared to some of the people I run into. I get my inspiration from finding some of the most colorful characters I can find and telling a story about them.

I don't want to bore my readers with my continued exploits. And I certainly don't want to come across as the expert on any given trip when it's actually the guide who has put me onto those fish or game.

Please don't get me wrong. There are many writers in OWAA who write first-person and do a magnificent job. When I first came to The Kansas City Star, I read the works of our former outdoors editor, Ray Heady.

He wrote in first-person in his book and I couldn't wait to go onto the next chapter. He wrote in a light, self-deprecating style and it was entertaining.

But that wasn't me. And that's the point I am trying to make.

Discover what you're most comfortable with and stay with it. Develop a writing style that will become your trademark.

Don't merely go to an outdoors magazine and try to copy the style of someone else. Be confident enough in yourself to find out how you want to tell the story.

Looking for inspiration? Don't let yourself get stale.

Strive for the unusual. Dozens of writ-

ers have written about just about every popular lake or river. It's up to you come up with something unique, maybe a guide who uses a new tactic or an oldtimer who tells how his fishing methods have changed over the years.

Put the tourism people to work. Let them beat the bushes for someone that stands out.

One of my good friends in the tourism business still laugh about the circumstances that led to a story that won an OWAA writing award.

I told her, “I am looking for a real Ozarks hillbilly; someone who only bathes once a month, only has a few teeth, lives in the backwoods and knows fishing and hunting better than anyone around.”

I was only half-kidding. Well, Marjorie, my tourism contact, found me that hillbilly.

She asked me, “Does it matter if it's a woman?”

I answered, “Heck, no. All the better.”

I met with Hillbilly Joyce at a friend's canoe rental place. My friend came out to greet me and said, “There's one thing. Hillbilly Joyce wanted to know if you're single.”

Gulp. I said, “I hope you told her I'm happily married.” I was envisioning some shotgun marriage in the woods.

We floated the Niangua River in southern Missouri that day, I got to know all about Joyce's background, and I had a story – and a new friend.

That's happened time and time again. I recently retired from The Kansas City Star after 36 years as the outdoors editor. But I'm still writing.

For me, the quest continues. I'm still looking for the characters that make our outdoors sports so great, and I'm still eager to tell their stories.

— Brent Frazee has been an OWAA member since 1980. He lives in Parkville, Missouri, with his wife, Jana, and his Labrador retriever, Zoey. For more of Brent's work, go to his website at brentfrazee.com. Email him at brentgonefishing@gmail.com.



**PHOTOGRAPHY
BY JOE MCDONALD**
www.hoothollow.com

BIG CATS

Joe McDonald has been a professional wildlife photographer for over 40 years, with a special interest in the big cats and other predators. He has photographed all seven of the world's big cats in one year four different times. The Snow Leopard has been the most difficult and challenging.



OPPOSITE PAGE:
A lion strolls in Masai
Mara, Kenya.

TOP RIGHT: A puma
mother and cub in
Torres del Plaine,
Chile. Capturing the
image took 10 trips
to the area over 15
years.

BOTTOM RIGHT:
A cheetah chases its
prey - a Gnu calf - at
Serengeti National
Park, Tanzania.





TOP LEFT:
Leopard at sunset,
Serengeti National
Park, Tanzania.



TOP RIGHT:
Puma cubs, Torres
del Paine, Chile

BOTTOM:
Lion killing an Afri-
can Buffalo, Masai
Mara, Kenya.



Jaguar stalks a Caiman that
was between Joe and the cat
in Pantanal, Brazil.

Writing for magazines ISN'T EASY

Learning to work with editors is key to landing assignments

BY SHAWN PERICH | HOVLAND, MINNESOTA

WHEN I WAS STARTING OUT, veteran writers told me magazine pay rates had barely increased throughout their careers. Thirty years later, I can make the same observation.

Frustration with hard work for low pay is a primary reason I transitioned my business from writing to publishing nearly 15 years ago. If anything, magazines are spending even less on editorial as they struggle to survive in an altered media landscape.

This doesn't mean you should avoid magazine writing, but don't think you can make a career out of it. Magazine writing is a grind where you pitch stories to editors, accept the assignments you receive, scurry to meet deadlines and all the while continue your constant search for new assignments.

The best you can hope for is to become a regular contributor to a handful of decent-paying publications and thus achieve some job security. To me, magazine writing is more lucrative as a side job, where your paychecks for stories augment your regular income.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves. Long before you can become a regular contributor, you have to break into the magazine business. So how do you go about doing so? For starters, National Geographic and the New Yorker can wait. Your first sales will likely be to local or regional magazines or, in the outdoor market, to tightly focused niche publications that cover an area of your expertise.

For instance, if you've developed a new peppermint-flavored stinkbait, you may sell a story describing it to a publication devoted to catfish. First, you'll need to query the editor, probably via email, with your story idea. Your query must convince the editor that the bait is unique and thus worthy of a story. You'll also have to convince the editor that you are a proficient writer, have sufficient photo support for the story, and are willing to pick up a phone and reach out to catfish experts whose input adds perspective and depth to your story.

For most editors, your professionalism is far more likely to make the sale than your expertise on a particular topic.

A good entry point for new writers is a local publication. At Northern Wilds, all of our writers are freelancers. We often work with new writers, some of whom become regular writers for us or eventually move up to bigger and better positions in the communications world. Most prospective writers introduce themselves with an email that goes along the lines of: "Hello, I'd like to write a story for Northern Wilds about this topic." Occa-

sionally, a hopeful writer will walk up and introduce themselves while I'm out and about. If the person appears to have potential, we'll assign a story to them or tell them to go ahead with the story they've pitched to us. Our best writers are versatile and can cover a broad array of topics. For a freelancer, it pays, literally, to be versatile.

Generally, magazines plan out the issue before making assignments. This means the editor has specific story needs. At Northern Wilds, we have a theme for the issue and build our selection of stories around the theme. We also make sure our stories are relevant to the month of publication and our readership. We rarely report on something that has already occurred. Instead, we look forward to what will be happening when the issue comes out. Some writers, especially those with a news reporting background, have trouble understanding this concept. As a result, they pitch story ideas that don't align with our editorial needs. When you approach an editor with a story idea, make sure you understand the magazine well enough to tailor the pitch to the editor's needs.

Most consumer magazines are visual products. They are designed to be attractive to the eye. The photos and graphics in a layout draw your interest to the story and encourage you to read the words. From an editor's perspective, how a story appears on the page is at least as important as what it says. This means it can be difficult to sell a story on the words alone. The key to successful freelancing is the ability to provide a complete story package. A great photographer with mediocre writing skills will nearly always outsell a great writer with mediocre photography skills.

In my experience, many writers don't understand the magazine production process, in which the editor plays a central role. A magazine has hundreds, if not thousands of moving pieces that must be assembled on a page, proofed, corrected and perhaps reassembled, then proofed, corrected and proofed again. All of this is done against a hard deadline. It is up to the editor to keep this process moving and to make all of the necessary decisions along the way.

After you click the send button to deliver your story package to the editor, that person must copyedit and perhaps fact-check your story (for sure any websites or telephone numbers you've provided), file the photos and select the ones to use, write the captions and headline, and work with the designer on the layout. If the editor has any questions or needs further information about your story, he or she will get back to you with the expecta-

Cookin' Up Another New Story

Change the ingredients, preparation to serve up different angles

BY TOM WATSON | APPLETON, MINNESOTA

THERE IS ONE THING I LOVE NEARLY as much as I love writing – cooking!

I find both have a lot in common. In fact, some of the ways I come up with new dishes is precisely the same way I've been able to take the basic ingredients of an initial story and "re-cook" them into several fresh and equally tasty articles.

It's sometimes even lucrative to pitch a new angle to an originally published piece to the same magazine to get a second and sometimes third run all based on an initial submission.

To carry the culinary analogy further, imagine an initial story on barbecuing salmon. You write about the foundation ingredient (fish); you talk about the preparation methods, the seasonings and other enhancements and so on up through the technical details of cooking temperatures and time.

Your next article might be built upon the same base category – cooking – but now you might talk about different methods of preparing your catch, or perhaps offer a selection of herbs and spices that work especially well to enhance fish and game. You might work up a travel piece that takes the reader around a region tasting local variations on a common theme.

"Sell the sizzle, not the steak!" is an old marketing adage that can be applied as well to re-telling and re-selling articles.

Each component of your article, each sizzling bit that enhances the overall story might be another a story in itself. Part of the editing process, especially if you subscribe to the "less is best" tenets of writing, might yield subtopics of the main story that would better lend themselves to becoming subject matter on their own.

I've been very successful writing about outdoor self-reliance and emergency skills and techniques – from basic steps to types of gear and everything in between. Each article has been rooted in the same basic format I've learned to trust, yet each subsequent treatment offers a new approach to the theme.

One step, for example, is emergency structures. From that first piece have sprung several additional articles: Shelter coverings; Useful Lashes and Knots for Emergencies; How to Make a Good Shelter Bed; Using Nature's Shelters. The list is limited only by my awareness of the versatility of the topic.

If I am ever at a loss for a topic to pitch to a publisher I've worked for before, I go back to my files and go through stories to see if there are new angles within that original text that can be used to create an updated or expanded (or more focused) piece for that publication.

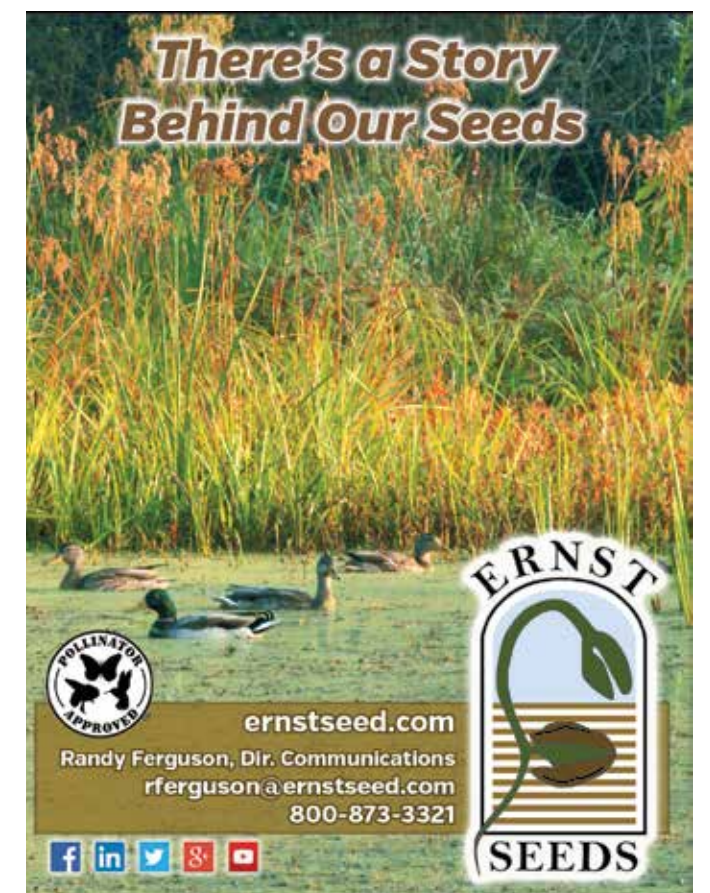
A common example of one good option is a crossover topic (kayak/destination adventure in a fishing magazine or a review citing the versatility of a hunting product that can be used in a

hiker's environment). Such cross-referencing for possible tie-in referencing most always leads to several new options to pursue.

In cooking you can always get by with the same meal time and time again. By changing the spices, ingredients and even the kind of heat you use, you can create so many more delicious entrees.

In the writing "kitchen," too, changing the recipe based on the main dish may enable you to cook up more and more tasty "meals" (and "dessert" sidebars, too?) – and even help keep more food on the table as well.

— Tom Watson is a freelance writer and photographer who specializes in Alaska, recreational paddling, self-reliance, outdoor destinations, and product reviews. A columnist and contributor to several publications, he has been an OWAA member for 31 years. This is a reprint of an article that first appeared in Outdoors Unlimited in 2010. The author's advice still has merit.



Continued on page 23

'Dying is easy; COMEDY IS HARD'

Even the best humor can be lost in translation

BY GLENN SAPIR |
PUTNAM VALLEY, NEW YORK

A version of this article originally appeared in the Dec. 27, 2000 edition of The Journal News.

Think about some of the humorous incidents you have witnessed in the outdoors. They should put a smile on your face, but try to relate them to someone else and see if the humor is lost in the telling.

Suffice to say, making people laugh is not easy.

"Ed Zern was the only humorist who could be consistently funny," said Joel M. Vance, an outstanding outdoor humorist in his own right and regular humor contributor to North American Fisherman magazine.

The late Ed Zern lived in Scarsdale, turning out cartoons and hilarious accompanying text for the back page of Field & Stream magazine for decades. His "Exit, Laughing" column allowed millions of readers to do just that each month.

"When I first started reading Zern, I don't think I really got it," said Alan Lieke, a Spokane, Washington-based outdoor humorist. "But as I read him, I appreciated him more and more. The way he turned a phrase was amazing. He not only turned a phrase, but he twisted it. He was a master at intentionally creating a misunderstanding."

Vance remembers a favorite "Exit, Laughing" that makes Lieke's point.

"The title was, 'How to Fix Cubed Moose,' and, of course, his initial step was, 'First, cube a moose.'"

Jack Samson, who spent a portion of his youth in North White Plains, served as editor of Field & Stream for a considerable stretch of Zern's run with the magazine.

"Ed and I were fishing in Canada once when we saw a flock of Arctic terns on the shore," Samson recalled. "Zern asked

for a rock, and I asked 'why?'"

"Every intelligent person knows," Zern replied, "one never leaves a tern unstoned."

John Troy, a retired teacher from Hardwick, N.J., is a cartoonist whose work regularly appears in all the state fish and game publications nationwide. His cartoons have been collected into 11 books. Troy also knows that Zern wasn't only funny in writing, but he was quick with a quip in person.

"I was at a book signing, when Zern's Parkinson's disease was in an advanced state. I saw how much his hand shook constantly, and I asked him if it made it difficult to write.

"Yes," he replied, "but I make a hell of an 'S' cast."

To a similar question Zern once replied to Samson, "At long last I can now fish a fly like a living insect."

Zern, in one of his fictitious letters to himself, Samson recalls, created a question from a British colonel, asking about the term, "deer in rut," which, of course, refers to the breeding period. In an "Exit, Laughing" column, Zern quoted the colonel and replied that the American white-tailed deer was a creature of habit, feeding in the same fields, drinking at the same stream and bedding down in the same patch of woods every night—hence "getting into a rut."

"We got hundreds of irate letters from readers," Samson recalled. "They thought he was serious."

How do these other humorists make people laugh?

"I show them what is obvious, what is truthful, and I put a funny slant to it so they look at it from another perspective," Troy said.

His favorite cartoon?

"Twenty guys are in a lifeboat on high seas in a terrible storm, with a guy in the bow dry-fly fishing. Another survivor, huddled in the lifeboat, says to him, 'My God, switch to wets; they'll never rise in seas like this.'"

How does Lieke make people laugh?

"I worry about that. I go upstairs to write a humorous article, and I have to figure out how to make people laugh. I try to relate, that is, pull up experiences that get the reader to react by thinking, 'Oh, yeah, I've been there. Maybe it wasn't quite that bad.' Sometimes I exaggerate and I always ask the question, 'What if?' That's the way it happened, but what if?"

Lieke's favorite short story was true and required no exaggeration.

"I was trying to build a large fish pond in my yard and at the same time I was trying to get a Rototiller to work. I couldn't do either and I took my readers through all of the hilariously incompetent steps. Finally, I got so frustrated, I filled in the pond, burying the Rototiller in the process."

Vance says that to make people laugh, he doesn't take himself too seriously.

"Too many writers concern themselves with imparting information—the mechanics of the outdoors. We have to remember we're in the entertainment business. We can't forget the human element. We ought to be having fun, so I bring people into it. People like to read about people."

In fact, Vance's personal favorite was a tribute to his dad, laced with humor.

"It was the first article Field & Stream bought from me and with my \$350 check I went out and bought our first color television."

This article is one of 166 formerly published, along with one previously unpublished, articles written by Glenn Saper and published in "A Saper Sampler: Favorites by an Outdoor Writer." Signed copies of the leatherette-bound hardcover are available for \$29.50 plus \$5 for P&H, from Glenn Saper, Ashmark Communications, Inc., 21 Shamrock Dr., Putnam Valley, NY 10579. Ten percent of OWAA member purchases will be donated to the OWAA Scholarship Fund.

The squandering of a miracle

Commodification leads to polluted water's devastating effects

BY RICH PATTERSON AND LARRY STONE
| CEDAR RAPIDS AND ELKADER, IOWA

WHEN YOU SAVOR YOUR MORNING COFFEE, ponder whether it might have once passed through other people you admire: Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, Aldo Leopold, your own grandfather.

Water, like air, is a miraculous substance required by all living creatures — yet owned by none. It sustains plant and animal life as it flows through Earth's circulation system, being reused in a never-ending cycle. As consumers, we should respect water, and return it to its natural cycle unsullied so others can benefit from its life-giving properties.

Society often doesn't treat our environment with respect. We view natural resources as commodities to be used — or used up — for personal benefit. We all can point to examples: a savanna destroyed to create a housing development; crop fields laid bare for six months between harvest and planting; a stream channelized to drain a wetland.

Aldo Leopold said it best in A Sand County Almanac 70 years ago:

"We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

Water is part of Leopold's "land," and it's a key component of the worldwide community to which all living things belong.

But farm groups and the government showed little respect for that community when they encouraged massive corn planting to produce ethanol, an economically and environmentally dubious fuel. As prices surged, farmers ripped out woodlots, fencerows and grasslands to plant ever more corn. Excessive fertilization, combined with new herbicides and insecticides, boosted yields while virtually eliminating insects and weeds.

It's no wonder pheasant and songbird numbers crashed as their food and habitat were eliminated. Studies in several parts of the world have documented declines of 40 to 80 percent in insect populations. Some scientists have termed the loss of insect numbers and diversity — and the potential impacts on entire ecosystems — an "insect apocalypse."

Fertilizers, along with pesticides, wash into our streams. Downstream communities inherit water contaminated with a stew of farmland effluent. It forces municipal waterworks to pay for expensive nitrogen removal, while kids can't swim in algae-choked lakes. Farther downstream, Gulf of Mexico shrimpers face economic hardship because nutrients cause a dead zone where shrimp can't live.

Ironically, those downstream shrimpers, water drinkers and anyone who'd like to take a dunk in a lake on a sweltering day are forced to pay taxes to fund subsidies received by the very

farmers who cause their woes.

Few dispute the negative effects of nutrient pollution coming from farmland, yet commodity groups and apologists for industrial agriculture plead that they don't need regulation. They will voluntarily change their practices to abate this pollution — eventually.

Some progressive farmers have reduced pollution by planting cover crops and stream buffers, rotating crops and reducing tillage. Happily, there's a growing movement among farmers who realize that restoring the health of natural soil organisms is a more sustainable — and profitable — approach to agriculture than searching for new chemicals.

Unfortunately, too many farm operators caught in the squeeze between low crop prices, high rental rates and climbing seed and agrochemical costs cut corners. Wildlife habitat continues to evaporate as runoff increases. It's disrespectful to the earth and fellow humans.

Government should help promote more diverse, sustainable agriculture, and sometimes it does. For example, the 2018 Federal Farm Bill legalizes growing industrial hemp with a low THC content. It's a once-banned crop that requires less input than corn, yet yields fiber, oil and seed.

The popular Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), initiated in 1985, pays farmers to plant trees, prairie species, and other perennial plants that provide wildlife habitat while reducing erosion and water pollution. Unfortunately, many former CRP acres were converted to cornfields as corn prices rose.

The Waters of the United States rule was implemented under the Obama Administration to extend Clean Water Act protection to small tributaries in an effort to reduce farmland pollution. It was successfully and aggressively resisted by farm groups and was recently eliminated by the Trump Administration.

Resistance to regulation, and the snail's pace of pollution reduction, could turn out to be self-defeating. Political winds shift. If pollution continues to increase, it's only a matter of time before the Gulf seafood industry politically unites with municipal water departments and recreationists. That coalition's goal would be land-use regulations that shift the cost of pollution onto those who cause it, and away from the downstream victims.

And to remind us that we all belong to the same community.

— Rich Patterson and Larry Stone are past recipients of the Jade of Chiefs Award and members of the Circle of Chiefs. Circle of Chiefs articles are written by those who have received the Jade of Chiefs Award for conservation reporting and coverage. The Jade of Chiefs honorees are considered OWAA's conservation council. The article reflects the opinion of the authors. If you'd like to add to the discussion, please send a letter to info@owaa.org.

Different problems... SAME REASONS

Humans inevitably err when they try to outsmart nature

BY PAT WRAY | CORVALLIS, OREGON

OF ALL OF GOD'S GIFTS TO EARTH and its inhabitants, sunrise has to be the very best. I suppose a case could be made for true love, and I'm sure there would be plenty of votes for warm chocolate chip cookies, but for my money, sunrise tops them all.

And very few could compete with the sunrise I recently experienced while standing in thigh-deep water on a 42-degree day in central Arkansas, listening to the whisper of mallard wings and hiding behind an oak tree with a borrowed 20-gauge shotgun. OK, it wasn't really a sunrise at all — it was more an early morning sun ooze through a low overcast cloud ceiling, but the hazy light did nothing to diminish the ethereal beauty of one of the most famous duck hunting areas in the world.

Along with other members of the OWAA board of directors who were in Little Rock for a mid-winter board meeting, I'd been invited by the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission (AGFC) to go duck hunting in Bayou Meto (pronounced BY-oh ME-doh) Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

We were surrounded by 33,000 acres of bottomland hardwood forest. In this part of Arkansas, bottomland means wet. Late fall and early winter have always brought periods of standing water, and standing water brings ducks, mallards mostly. The mallards feed

primarily on acorns, which they pluck easily from the bottom of the shallow waters. But those waters have historically been seasonal and fluctuated widely according to rainfall. As a result, so did duck hunting.

What was needed, reasoned AGFC managers, was a method of controlling water in the hardwoods, keeping shallow water in place throughout the fall and winter in order to provide consistent hunting opportunities throughout the duck season. So, in the 1950s the state acquired Bayou Meto and began incorporating dams, levees and other water control features. Mission accomplished. But there's always a cost, even if it doesn't manifest itself immediately.

In the past several years, subspecies of oak trees that provided most of the ducks' food — nuttall oaks, willow oaks and red oaks — began showing stress. Interestingly, these trees, which evolved and thrived during intermittent flooding, weren't all that fond of being under water constantly for four months or more. In the nearby Henry Gray Hurricane Lake WMA, aerial photos last spring showed that 212 acres of hardwood had recently died and another 800 acres were severely stressed and likely to succumb.

Arkansas wildlife managers have responded aggressively, removing some water control structures completely and modifying others to simulate the ebb and flow of natural water movement. They've also moved to reduce the numbers of hunters on state wildlife

management areas.

As I stood in the cold waters of Bayou Meto, hoping for some of the passing mallards to cup their wings and circle down, I couldn't help but think about the issues of Bayou Meto and how they mirror the lessons we are still learning in the Pacific Northwest.

More than 100 years ago, we built our first fish hatchery, and it took us decades to realize that fish we were developing and releasing often overwhelmed native fish they were supposed to be supplementing. Now we have hatcheries specifically designed to simulate natural conditions, using native strains so the fish are capable of surviving and thriving once released.

Isn't it funny how the more we learn, the more we attempt to return to Mother Nature's plan? I guess that's what happens when we don't know what we don't know. I can hardly wait to see what happens when the bill comes due for all the fracking and deep well injection going on in search of oil and gas.

How do you spell hubris?

— *Circle of Chiefs articles are written by those who have received the Jade of Chiefs Award for conservation reporting and coverage. The Jade of Chiefs honorees are considered OWAA's conservation council. The article reflects the opinion of the author. If you'd like to add to the discussion, please send a letter to the editor.*

RMEF Elk Camp set for July in Utah

Open air entertainment, live podcasts, hunting film premieres, the Total Archery Challenge experience, elk hunting and cooking seminars, interactive exhibits, raffles and auctions, outdoor events, the World Elk Calling Championships and much more. It all happens under the blue skies at 7,000 feet in the heart of elk country.

The 2019 RMEF Elk Camp will take place July 11-14 in Park City, Utah.

"There is no better place to celebrate elk, conservation and hunting than outside in the mountains," said Kyle Weaver, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation president and CEO.

The RMEF Mountain Festival is free, open to the public, and will be held outdoors in the shadows of the Wasatch Mountains in the Canyons Village at Park City. It will feature more than 100 outdoor industry vendors and interactive displays including elk hunting and elk calling seminars, well-known hunting personalities and live music.

Go to www.rmef.org/Events/ElkCampMountainFest for registration, a daily event schedule and other information.

NSSF, BJA UNVEIL GUN SAFETY VIDEOS

The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) have unveiled a new video series — Many Paths to Firearms Safety — to help new and potential gun owners understand the responsibilities they have if they decided to keep a firearm in their home.

The series reflects that more Americans — especially women — are buying guns for many different reasons, ranging from personal protection to recreational shooting. The central message is that while there are many different reasons why some-

one would choose to buy a gun, the common thread among them must be a commitment to store firearms responsibly when not in use so they can't be picked up by a child, stolen or accessed by someone who may want to harm themselves.

The videos portray three different gun owners and their stories of ownership, along with the steps they took to make sure they will handle and store their firearms safely when not in use.

The new videos are viewable online at <https://projectchild-safe.org/educationalvideos>.

PILOT PROJECT RECYCLES OLD FIBERGLASS BOATS

A pilot project funded by BoatUS and recreational marine industry businesses in Rhode Island aims to finally find a solution for recycling boats.

The most common way to dispose of an old boat is to crush and bury the pieces in a landfill where the fiberglass (essentially plastic) degrades slowly. Some boats are abandoned, left derelict by their owners or lost to storms, potentially creating navigation hazards or causing environmental harm to waterways.

Begun in 2018, the Rhode Island Fiberglass Vessel Recycling (RIFVR) Pilot Project aims to address the disposal issue for the high number of recreational fiberglass boats reaching the end of their service lives. Between 2003 and 2012 alone, about 1.5 million recreational boats in the U.S. were "retired."

The pilot project has collected 20 tons of recycled material and is preparing to process the material to supply to concrete plants, where it will be used as an energy source and as a filler for concrete products, according to Evan Ridley of the Rhode Island Marine Trades Association (RIMTA), the project's sponsor.

Writing for Magazines continued from page 18

tion you will address those concerns promptly. Remember, you are likely one of a dozen or more writers and photographers with whom the editor is working.

If you want to stay in the good graces of an editor, meet their expectations in the assignment. Turn in a story that is written to the best of your ability.

When working with editors, remember this: Editors don't take sensitivity training classes. They have little time for writers who whine or act self-important and condescending. Leave your ego at the door. Your words are not golden. They will be edited. Your story may be cut and your photo cropped in order to fit the available space. That's the way the cookie crumbles. Unless the edits change the context or accuracy of the story, you really have nothing to complain about.

If you want to score points with an editor, tell them you can include a short video or podcast related to the story for the magazine's website. Tell them you are willing to promote the

story when it is published on your own social media platforms. Go the extra mile for an editor and you may be rewarded with another story assignment.

The bottom line is this. Freelancing is a tough game. Never do less than your best, because you are always facing competitors who are willing to work harder and do it better than you. Understand that magazines are published in full color. Visuals are important. The days when you could get by solely as a writer are long passed. Make sure you have a working knowledge of photography, as well as the media platforms employed by magazines, including video, podcasts, websites and social media. In this era of so-called "new media," versatility is the key to succeeding as an outdoor communicator.

— *Shawn Perich is the publisher of Northern Wilds, a columnist for Minnesota Outdoor News, and a book author. An OWAA member since 1985, he is a member of OWAA's Board of Directors.*



DONORS

January through April 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.

OPERATING FUND

Jim Low
Joel Vance
John Kruse
Paul Queneau
Ruth Hoyt
America Outdoors Radio/Northwestern Outdoors Radio
Renaissance Charitable Foundation

BOB SMITH FUND

Jim Low

CREDENTIALS REVIEWS:

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

Nick Lowrey

NEW MEMBERS

New member listings include references to acronyms that relate to Skills, Subject Matter and Sections. A key for those acronyms can be found at owaa.org/ou/about-owaa-skills-subject-matter-sections/.

MIKE ADAMS, 105 Griscom Mill Rd., Corbin City, NJ 08270. (H) 609-675-0150, mike53adams@gmail.com. Freelance outdoor writer, wildlife field professional and conservation advocate hailing from southern New Jersey. Recent bylines, American Frontiersman, Backcountry Journal, Grit Magazine, NJ Audubon, The Upland Almanac and more. Primarily employs hunting and fishing narratives to carry forward a greater philosophical or informative conservation message. Most recently, has been working on feature pieces for Eastern Fly Fishing Magazine and The FlyFish Journal. Contracted under Stone Road Media, where he curates blog content for outdoor industry brands. Co-chair, New Jersey chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers. Lectures at BHA events, proposes future outreach programs and, at times, writes for their magazine,

Backcountry Journal. Full time job is with New Jersey Fish and Wildlife as a wildlife technician. Skills: CELNOW; Subject Matter: ABCFGLOQRST; Sections: M. Approved for Active membership; sponsored by Joe Bilby.

ARMANDO BASULTO, 205 Kelly Springs Rd., Waynesville, NC 28786. (H) 828-230-5056, basultobjj@yahoo.com. Avid and life-long outdoorsman, writer, photographer and hunter. Has been featured in a wide variety of outdoor and action-lifestyle publications including American Frontiersman, American Survival Guide, Ballistic, Tactical Life, Survivor's Edge, Carnivore, and many others. Has developed working relationships with a diverse group of creative vendors and publishers in the outdoor industry. Has co-authored a combatives manual for the Special Operations community. Skills: OSW; Subject Matter: CDFGILPQ; Sections: MP. Approved for Active membership; sponsored by Tim Mead.

JOHN KEATLEY, Florida Hikes, P.O. Box 10046, Cocoa, FL 32927. (H) 321-536-4058, jknavigator@gmail.com, www.floridahikes.com. A native Floridian growing up along the Space Coast, has spent most of his youth in the woods or on the water, attaining the rank of Eagle Scout in 1973. During a 33-year career on the Space Shuttle program at Kennedy Space Center found time between missions to unwind in the outdoors. After the program ended, turned his decades of attention to detail toward writing about the outdoors. Joined FloridaHikes.com in 2012 as a regular contributor, with a strong focus on cycling, paddling, and hiking. Has since co-authored seven outdoor and travel books, most recently the third edition of "50 Hikes in Central Florida." Regularly writes about travel on TrailsandTravel.com with a special emphasis on cycling trips. Is a member of the Florida Outdoor Writers Association and the Society of American Travel Writers, and the founder of the Florida Trail Hikers Alliance. (Sandra Friend) Skills: BLOS; Subject Matter: GHJKLNS; Sections: P. Approved for Active membership; sponsored by Larry Larsen.

JOHN RADZWILLA, Hook & Barrel Magazine, 9808 Bitterroot Dr., Oak Point, TX 75068. (H) 570-814-9221, john@hookandbarrel.com, <http://www.hookandbarrel.com>. Founder, owner, and editor-in-chief, Hook & Barrel Magazine. Passionate about the outdoors, particularly the lifestyle that encompasses it. Ask him his favorite hunt or fish to catch and he'll respond "any that get me outside, with a cold beer in my hand, and in the company of good friends." (Natalie) Skills: EPW; Subject Matter: ABCDFGHKLPST; Sections: M. Approved for Active membership; sponsored by Karen Loke.

MEGAN ROSS, 8182 Phippen Dr., Romeo, MI 48065. (H) 586-713-8629, meganross@ou.edu, www.meganross.co. Senior journalism and art student at the University of Oklahoma pursuing a career in environmental journalism, combining her love for the outdoors, photography and writing. Skills: ACDEOSW; Subject Matter: GLNORST; Sections: MP. Approved for Student membership.

TOM VENESKY, 450 W. County Rd., Wapwallopen, PA 18660. (C) 570-212-1235, ih240@msn.com. Has been a full-time outdoors writer since 2000 for two daily newspapers, The Citizens' Voice and The Times Leader, in northeastern Pennsylvania. He has also been a regular contributor to Pennsylvania Outdoor News beginning in 2007 and a columnist since 2012. Has provided freelance work for several outlets, including Pennsylvania Game News, The Athletic, and numerous newspapers. He has also written and hosted several deer hunting segments for a television news program (WBRE-28) in Pennsylvania. Has won numerous awards for his work from the Pennsylvania Newspaper Association, Associated Press, Pheasants Forever and the Quality Deer Management Association. He and his wife, Kathleen, reside on a family farm in rural Pennsylvania with their children, Hunter and Kelly Ann. (Kathleen) Skills: ELNOW; Subject Matter: ACIORSU; Sections: BMN. Approved for Active membership; sponsored by Dennis Schardin.

NATHANIEL WILSON, 29 Gilmer Dr., Anderson, SC 29621. (C) 864-430-6502, wilsonath@gmail.com, www.bluewalljournal.com. Native of Greenville, South Carolina and currently a fisheries and wildlife biology student at Clemson University. Prior to enrolling, has spent much of the last decade working as a guide and leading river trips on the Rogue and Chetco Rivers in Oregon and The Middle Fork of The Salmon River in Idaho's Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. Has contributed both images and text to several river focused guidebooks as well as national and regional conservation campaigns. Along with his wife, recently co-founded Blue Wall Journal that will exist as a home for educational content meant to drive increased engagement with the natural world. (Christine) Skills: MOS; Subject Matter: AGJKORS; Sections: P. Approved for Student membership.

REINSTATED MEMBERS

Reinstated member listings include references to acronyms that relate to skills, subject matter and sections. A key for those acronyms can be found at <http://owaa.org/ou/about-owaa-skills-subject-matter-sections/>.

SHANE TOWNSEND, 105 Seamoore Dr., Fredericksburg, TX 78624. (H) 830-456-4563, (W) 512-879-1969, townsend-jshane@gmail.com, www.linkedin.com/in/jshanetownsend. Foreign service officer serving at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya. Fellow at The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment. In 2014, FalconGuides published his first book "Paddling Texas." Writes for Hatch magazine and has written for Garden & Gun, Field & Stream, Quail Forever, National Shooting Sports Foundation, USA TODAY Hunt & Fish, GAFF (satirical, last page, humor columnist), Sporting Classics, Americas Magazine, Cabelas, Canoe & Kayak, Native Peoples, SHOT Daily, SHOT Business, Kayak Angler, Mississippi Magazine, and others. (Abby) Skills: BCEOQS; Subject Matter: ABCDEFGKL; Sections: M.

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 owaa.org/ou/about-owaa-supporter-resources/.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE FUND, 301 Congress Ave., Ste. 1300, Austin, TX 78701. Contact: Sepp Haukebo, program manager - recreational fisheries. (W) 409-789-3335, shaukebo@edf.org, www.edf.org. Since 1967, we've found innovative ways to solve the toughest environmental problems. We work on issues related to the terrestrial, aquatic, and marine environments finding solutions that meet economic and ecological needs. We work with user groups like farmers, ranchers, hunters, and fishermen while also helping to fill the needs of resource managers and scientists. Resources: CO.

NAVIONICS, 142 Sealy Place, Pendergrass, GA 30567. Contact: Tom Branch Jr., promotions manager. (W) 770-235-3567,

tbranch@navionics.com, www.navionics.com/usa. Navionics was established in 1984 in Viareggio, Italy. Navionics® produces electronic charts for the leisure boating and fishing markets. Owned by Garmin. Our mission is to delight our customer by producing market leading intuitive and innovative marine cartography content and features through the use of creativity, engineering excellence through market knowledge and efficient production procedures. We want to expand as the global leader in marine content and location-based services built on innovation derived from our lifestyle appreciation, digital expertise and crowdsourcing. Our cartography database is the world's largest and includes oceans, seas, rivers and more than 38,000 lakes. Navionics makes this unique and valuable content available to boaters for use in GPS chartplotters, and within our app for Apple® and Android devices. Resources: P.

OREGON'S MT. HOOD TERRITORY, 1830 Blankenship Rd., Ste. 100, West Linn, OR 97068. Contact: Casey Knopik, public relation and marketing specialist. (W) 503-742-5953, casey@mt Hoodterritory.com, www.mthoodterritory.com. Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory is the official destination marketing organization for Clackamas County, Oregon, and is responsible for developing and promoting tourism throughout the county. We work to increase the number of new and repeat visitors to strengthen the local economy. For more information on Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory visit www.mthoodterritory.com. Resources: CP.

PLANETARY DESIGN, P.O. Box 1011, Bonner, MT 59823. Contact: Jess Nepstad, CEO Owner. (W) 406-728-7008, (F) 406-728-6447, jess@planetarydesign.us, <http://www.planetarydesigns.us>. Secondary contact: Alysia Perkins, director of finance, alysia@planetarydesign.us. Makers of ultra-durable coffee gear for barista quality brew anytime, anywhere — backcountry, cross-country, road trips, van life, RVing, camping, hiking, biking or just enjoying a nice hygge afternoon, we've got the best coffee brewing and storage gear for your adventure. Supporter Resources: GIP.

VISIT VACAVILLE, 1671 E. Monte Vista Ave., Ste. N-110, Vacaville, CA 95688. Contact: Melyssa Laughlin, president & CEO. (W) 707-450-0500, www.visitvacaville.com. Destination marketing organization for Vacaville, California.

REINSTATED 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 <http://owaa.org/ou/about-owaa-supporter-resources/>.

R.L. WINSTON ROD COMPANY, 500 S. Main St., Twin Bridges, MT 59759. Contact: Leslie Clark, marketing. (W) 406-684-5674, (Toll Free) 866-946-7637, (F) 406-684-5533, lclark@winstonrods.com, <http://www.winstonrods.com>. The R.L. Winston Rod Company has been building the world's finest flyfishing rods since 1929. Supporter Resources: GIP.

FIFTY WOMEN WHO FISH

AUTHOR: Steve Kantner

INFO: Wild River Press; hardcover; 300-plus pages; color photos; \$59.95

Written by Florida angler Steve Kantner and published by Wild River Press, *Fifty Women Who Fish* is the most comprehensive book ever published about where, why and how women fish. Kantner spent two full years speaking with devout women anglers far and wide, seeking out a wide range of female anglers, from age 20 to 90, from the Florida Keys all the way to Alaska. They fish for nearly every species that swims in freshwater and salt. They fish with lures and flies and bait. They fish out of multi-million-dollar sport-fishing yachts and out of kayaks, off piers and beaches. All are passionate about their favorite outdoor sport. Their personal stories are fascinating.



MOVING WATER: AN ARTIST'S REFLECTIONS ON FLY FISHING, FRIENDSHIP AND FAMILY

AUTHOR: Dave Hall

INFO: Blaine Creek Press; hardcover; 54 pages; 20 painting images; \$23.95

Moving Water explores the friendships made through our passions – in this case, fly fishing. Featuring 20 of author Dave Hall's ethereal landscape paintings, *Moving Water* tells his moving story about an introduction to fly fishing as a boy, of the influence of a family of artists, and the closest of friends, and with an ending that will sadden and inspire. Hall paints and writes on the Henry's Fork of the Snake River in Idaho. Signed copies are available at www.MovingWater.org/giving-back with 25 percent of every sale going to river conservation.



EXTINCT BIRDS PROJECT

AUTHOR: Alberto Rey

INFO: Canadaway Press; softcover; 208 pages; 143 illustrations; \$65

The Extinct Birds Project started in 2015 after the author witnessed a drawer full of extinct birds at the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History in Jamestown, New York. Countless questions ran through Rey's mind: How did the institution get these extinct birds? Why did they go extinct? Where were these birds collected? Who collected them? His beautifully-designed and illustrated full-color book, which accompanies an exhibition and this website (<http://www.extinctbirdsproject.com/>), tries to answer these questions and more about 17 extinct birds species. The essays and illustrations present complicated global environmental and societal issues in an accessible and interesting manner.



HIKING INDIANA, 3RD EDITION

AUTHOR: Phil Bloom

INFO: Falcon Guides / Globe Pequot; softcover; 272 pages; all color maps and photos; \$24.95.

Written by award-winning outdoor editor and author Phil Bloom, this guide includes more than 70 hikes, ranging from easy afternoon jaunts to multi-day backpack trips. Enjoy the richly diverse offerings, from Indiana Dunes National Park on Lake Michigan to the rolling hills of Brown County State Park, from the banks of the Wabash River to the Charles C. Deam Wilderness in Hoosier National Forest. Each featured hike includes detailed hike specs and descriptions, trailhead location and GPS coordinates, mile-by-mile directional cues, gorgeous full-color photography, and a detailed map.



ARMANDO BASULTO

Armando is an avid and life-long outdoorsman, writer, photographer and hunter. His work has been featured in a wide variety of outdoor and action-lifestyle publications including *American Frontiersman*, *American Survival Guide*, *Ballistic*, *Tactical Life*, *Survivor's Edge*, *Carnivore*, and many others. Armando has developed working relationships with a diverse group of creative vendors and publishers in the outdoor industry. In addition, he has co-authored a combatives manual for the Special Operations community. Armando holds undergraduate degrees from Montclair State University and NYU as well as a Master's degree from Fordham University.



TOM VENESKY

After 20 years as an outdoors writer for a daily newspaper in Pennsylvania, Tom Venesky recently transitioned into freelance outdoors writing on a full-time basis, covering everything from hunting and fishing to nature and wildlife. His work has been published in numerous newspapers and magazines. He also has television and radio experience. Tom has earned numerous awards for his writing from the Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association and the Pennsylvania Associated Press Managing Editors Association. Tom lives in the small town of Hobbie in northeastern Pennsylvania with his wife, Kathleen, and their 6-year-old twins, Hunter and Kelly Ann.



OU: This is your magazine

Members are encouraged to contribute articles, artwork

BY PHIL BLOOM
| FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

The first issue of *Outdoors Unlimited* was published in 1940. It didn't take much to fill the "magazine" in those early days because it was printed on 8x14 paper and folded to make a finished look at about 8 inches by 6 inches. The back page proclaimed it the Official Organ of OWAA.

Besides the planning, editing, and design work that goes into today's *Outdoors Unlimited*, there's a need for a lot more content – articles and photos.

In the first *Outdoors Unlimited*, editor J. Hammond Brown wrote: "This is your newspaper and it will be just as interesting as you yourselves make it. Meeting once a year does not make for any great amount of understanding between us. This little journal can do the job if all of us pull together."

Although OU's format has changed, Brown's message has not.

That's where you come in.

Outdoors Unlimited is your magazine. It's an opportunity to share what you know – or what you think you know –

with other OWAA members.

One of the key elements of OWAA's mission statement is to improve the professional skills of our members. We do that in OU with Craft Improvement articles like the ones you see in this issue by Brent Frazee, Shawn Perich, Ron Schara, and Alex Zidock.

You are welcome to offer articles on how to write better leads, take better photos, expand your reach with radio or TV.

CIRCLE OF CHIEFS

The Circle of Chiefs regularly produce opinion pieces on conservation issues, but as my brother-in-law often says, "Opinions are like noses and elbows – everybody has one or two."

If you have a different take on a topic the Chiefs have tackled, nothing prevents you from offering a counter point of view.

This is your magazine, too.

We also print letters to the editor, so if there's something you want to get off your chest, fire away.

YOUR PHOTOS

The Portfolio that spans two, three, and sometimes four pages of the magazine is

an opportunity to showcase your photographs or illustrations.

YOUR BOOKS

Bookshelf is another place to promote your work. All it takes is sending in a cover shot of your book and brief notes – who is the publisher, is it hardcover/softcover, how many pages, what's the cover cost.

ANYTHING ELSE?

What else? You name it, OU staff will at least consider it.

The suggested length for submissions is 650 to 750 words, and if you have a photo or artwork to go along with it, that's even better.

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

If you have stories or photos for *Outdoors Unlimited*, email them to info@owaa.org.

LOOKING FOR WORK?
CONNECT WITH OTHER WRITERS
AND EDITORS AT OWAA.COM



OUTDOOR WRITERS
ASSOCIATION
of America

OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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LOOKING FOR MORE? Go online to read past issues of *Outdoors Unlimited*. PDFs are also available for printing. Visit: owaa.org/ou/category/departments/table-of-contents.

Meet a member

NAME: Drew YoungeDyke
RESIDENCE: Ann Arbor, Michigan
OWAA MEMBER SINCE: 2018
WEBSITE: <https://blog.nwf.org/authors/drew-youngedyke/page/2/>

AREA(S) OF OUTDOOR COMMUNICATION: I am the communications coordinator for the National Wildlife Federation Great Lakes Regional Center. I do public relations, write for magazines, blog, and do a podcast.

WHAT DREW YOU TO THE FIELD? It's better than being an insurance lawyer! I'm amazed I've found a career that allows me to write about conservation, weave in my personal outdoor recreation experiences, and get paid for it. I love the outdoors and participating in nature on an active level, and I believe in conserving it.

WHAT ENTICED YOU TO JOIN (OR REJOIN) OWAA? To communicate the work of the National Wildlife Federation to the best outdoor writers in America, and, as a freelance outdoor writer, to learn from them myself.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE OUTDOOR ACTIVITY? Still-hunting whitetail deer with a recurve bow out of a backpack camp on public land. Though there are more effective ways to obtain venison, this method triggers an embedded, ancient instinct which no other outdoor activity can.



WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON? Producing the NWF Outdoors Podcast, encouraging hunters and anglers to use non-lead ammunition and fishing tackle to reduce impacts on non-target wildlife like bald eagles and loons, generating support for the plan to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes, writing my new column for Woods-N-Water News on outdoor recreation and fitness, and raising my new son, Noah!

WHAT HAVE YOU GAINED FROM THE ORGANIZATION? The National Wildlife Federation has benefitted by spreading the message about work like the need to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes, which is part of my job. I've also personally benefitted through new assignments for National Wildlife, craft improvement, personal connections, and introducing my niece to National Parks by buying her Ken Keffer's *Ranger Rick* book.