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Tips for working from home, how to photograph birds in flight AND MORE.
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ON THE COVER
We aren’t asking for money

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS OR NONPROFITS, whatever you want
to call entities with a 501 (c) (3) status, are often driven by the financial kind-
ness of their members.

OWAA applauds the generosity of our members, but we are not asking for money. We
are asking you for nonfinancial help.

OWAA staff has worked hard to build our Facebook followers from about 1,000 last
year to more than 4,000 today. We did this with an eye to fundraising.

Research indicates that a cause organization with a strong fundraising and social media
engagement should earn $8-$14 per social media follower. When we extrapolate those
numbers and compare them to our average annual fundraising, we have some work to
do.

We average about $5,000 a year in donations, most of which goes to our fellowship
and scholarship funds. If we take the most conservative numbers above, we should be in
the neighborhood of $24,000 a year. That’s a lot of money for our endowments and for
operational budgets like marketing and member recruitment.

This is where we are asking you for help; there are ways that you can contribute to the
organization without burdening your own finances. The internet is filled with ways to
ask your friends and family to contribute to your favorite organization.

Last year Facebook rolled out a birthday initiative that allows users to ask friends to
contribute to the birthday person’s favorite organization. Marion Patterson and I asked
our friends to contribute to OWAA for our birthdays instead of sending us gifts. Be-
tween the two of us, we earned $500 in donations for OWAA.

Imagine if only 10 percent of the organization’s 700 active members did this. That
alone would get us to more than $14,000, without our members ever opening a check-
book.

Here’s how it works: Two weeks before your birthday, Facebook reminds you to host
a birthday fundraiser. You can change the text to anything you want and can set a fund-
raising goal. Once you select OWAA as your benefactor, you post to your newsfeed and
watch your donations grow. I would encourage all members to try this at least once.

Another easy fundraising option is Amazon Smile. Even if you disdain Amazon’s
business practices, the Smile program is an easy way to passively raise money for the
organization. The Smile Foundation gives .05 percent of all purchases on your Amazon
account to the organization you support. Imagine if every OWAA member who shops
Amazon were to participate in this program.

Let’s say that 200 members spend $100 a quarter on Amazon. OWAA would get .05
percent of $20,000. That is $1,000 a quarter or $4,000 a year. Add that to our $14,000
in Facebook birthday donations and we’re at $18,000.

Finally are the one-off fundraisers. Last year we earned about $1,200 on Giving
Tuesday. Most research suggests that four to six one-offs a year around events that mirror
your organization’s mission are the sweet spot. These fundraisers, though they don’t
require your dollars, do require your help promoting them with shares and appeals to
your followers.

Say we earn $1,000 across six fundraisers, then we add that to the $18,000 from Face-
book birthdays and the Amazon Smile’s $4,000, well, that is the magic $24,000. Two
years of this would place this organization in a financial position we have not been in in
a very long time. But more importantly, it provides us a marketing budget that can lead
to individual membership and supporting group growth that bolsters our annual budget
even more.

This all sounds easy, because it is. But to succeed we need participation and engage-
ment from our members.

If you are interested in helping with any of these or promoting a fundraiser yourself,
but not sure how to do it, give me a call. I will help you set it up, and we will blast your
efforts across the OWAA social media channels. So what do we think, membership?
Think we can get to $12,000 this year?

— Brandon Shuler is OWAA’s executive director. Reach him at
brandon@owaa.org or 406-552-4049.
As I write this, I’m still in the amber afterglow of yet another amazing OWAA conference, this one in early June in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Without fail, these gatherings send me home energized about the quality of people and professional contacts I make in this organization, our storied history and the potential we have together to make a difference out there through the work we do. Good mojo flows through OWAA’s veins, and it’s never more obvious than when we all gather in person to learn, connect and celebrate.

But I also always leave conference feeling galvanized about certain ways I can see that this organization might sharpen what it offers and how we might grow our ranks with more good people. As I took over as board president in Fort Wayne, I was thrilled to have a number of folks approach me looking for ways they might give back and get more involved.

That’s inspiring, because it took me a few years after joining to see past the basic benefits of being a member and understand that much of what OWAA is able to offer is due to the cooperative efforts of members who give back — and the spirit of community we create in the process.

One simple and powerful way you can both get further involved and get more out of OWAA is to become active in the professional sections that match your work and interests, i.e. magazine, newspaper, photography, broadcast and media relations. If you haven’t already received one, you should soon get an email from section chairs inviting you to get involved and providing links to interact through the section’s Facebook page and other forums.

Sections provide a superb platform where you can poll your peers on any questions or professional conundrums you face in our work, where you can provide that same kind of advice to others, and where you can help guide and contribute to what topics are covered in the pages of this magazine and at next year’s conference.

As a magazine editor, though, I often can’t help keep from analyzing OWAA’s outreach and marketing, how we organize contests, choose speakers at conference, etc., etc. Those decisions are made not only by OWAA’s trio of staffers, but are also often the efforts and creative thinking that come from this organization’s committees.

If you have interests and professional experience that line up with any of the committees listed on page 23, please consider joining their ranks. They need good minds that care about those topics, and most only ask for a small time commitment to discuss and brainstorm ideas and set reasonable goals. And truly, they are vital to this organization.

While I’m on the topic, let me take this moment to thank all those who have stepped up to chair committees this year. It’s a labor of love, but I want to make sure it’s not a thankless one. Each of these committees represents a vital pillar of what makes this organization tick, and the better each of them functions, the more OWAA is able to do for its membership and the outdoor world we work to chronicle and conserve.
O
WAA’S BOARD OF DIRECTORS elected Pat Wray of Corvallis, Oregon, second vice president at its June 1 meeting in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

As second vice president, Wray will serve on the planning committee for the 2019 conference to be held in Little Rock, Arkansas. He will also become president of the organization in June 2020.

“Pat Wray brings a deep quiver of life experiences and outdoor writing credits to OWAA’s leadership,” said Paul Queneau, OWAA’s president. “He is both a military veteran, having flown helicopters for the Marine Corps in Southeast Asia during the 1970s, and a consummate outdoor writer, book author, photographer and dedicated OWAA member whose work has appeared across a wide variety of newspapers, magazines and radio for more than three decades. I’m confident he will bring all that to bear leading OWAA.”

Wray, an OWAA member since 1984, officially took office June 4, the same day Queneau, of Missoula, Montana, began his term as OWAA’s president. Queneau replaced Phil Bloom, of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

John Kruse of Wenatchee, Washington, also joined OWAA’s leadership as a new member of the organization’s board of directors. Kruse, an OWAA member since 2012, is host and producer for two syndicated outdoor radio shows. He is also a freelance writer and guidebook author. He replaced Matt Soberg and will serve until 2020.

“I was elated to hear that John Kruse would serve on the board after Matt Soberg stepped down in May,” Queneau said. “John has a long history with this organization and a very impressive body of work with Northwestern Outdoors Radio. He brings unique knowledge and experience to the table, and will be a welcome and valued addition to OWAA’s leadership.”

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Peterson, Simpson honored at conference

OWAA’S BOARD OF DIRECTORS awarded Christine Peterson Outstanding Board Member of the Year at the 2018 conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Peterson joined the board in 2016.

“The Board of Directors had several strong contributors this year, but Christine was an absolute standout,” said outgoing president Phil Bloom. “That fact obviously caught the attention of her board colleagues, who voted her this honor. She regularly contributed valuable insights that helped shape the conversation of board business while adding to her contributions to OWAA matters by chairing not one but two committees — officer nominating and national affairs & environment.”

Ann Simpson of Stephens City, Virginia, received the Committee Volunteer of the Year Award at the same conference. The award, in its second year, is meant to recognize excellence, commitment and service “beyond the call of duty while serving on an OWAA committee.”

Simpson developed a judging rubric for the education committee to use when evaluating entries in the Norm Strung Youth Writing Contest.

“It not only proved invaluable this year but also provides a way for future contest judges to be effective in selecting contest winners,” Bloom said.

Nine students win Bodie McDowell scholarships

The Outdoor Writers Association of America awarded nine Bodie McDowell scholarships totaling $24,500 for the 2018-19 school year to undergraduate and graduate students studying outdoor communications.

This year’s recipients are:

• COLLIN RILEY, undergraduate student in communications at University of North Dakota, $1,000
• FORREST CZARNECKI, undergraduate student in journalism at Colorado State University, $4,000
• KATELYN GILLE, undergraduate student in sustainable parks, recreation and tourism at Michigan State University, $2,500
• MEGAN ROSS, undergraduate student in journalism at University of Oklahoma, $1,000
• RYAN CHELIUS, undergraduate student in environmental studies at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, $3,000
• HUGO SINDELAR, graduate student in science and natural history filmmaking at Montana State University, $3,500
• KAITLIN SULLIVAN, graduate student in science journalism at CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, $1,500
• TANA WILSON, graduate student in film and media arts at Clemson University, $2,500
• TREvor RitlAnD, graduate student in science communication at Northern Arizona University, $5,500

Recipients are paid at the commencement of the fall semester, and also receive a one-year student membership in the Outdoor Writers Association of America. OWAA's endowment trustees manage the Bodie McDowell Scholarship Fund and distribute funds to college scholarship recipients each year in accordance with OWAA bylaws. This year, 22 students applied for scholarships through the program. Recipients were selected by members of the education committee, chaired by Lisa Ballard.

For more information and to apply, visit www.owaa.org/programs/scholarships-fellowships/bodie-mcdowell-scholarship.
Capturing characters in profiles

BY LARRY STONE | ELKADER, IOWA

“POISONS!”

Gladys Black spat out the word when she chastised politicians and bureaucrats about the evils of pesticide use and the chemical hazards to birds and our environment.

That one-word quote begins to paint a word picture of a passionate environmentalist. But call her a tree hugger or an eccentric little old lady at your peril.

“Iowa’s Bird Lady” is just one of the many characters I’ve had the privilege to write about over several decades of exploring Iowa’s outdoors. To be sure, Gladys’s gravelly voice, hand-crafted cap with the Iowa Ornithologists’ Union logo and her homemade pouch carrying her bird book — and probably a half-smoked cigarette — made it easy to describe her to readers.

The challenge comes in fleshing out those initial impressions. That’s where good, old-fashioned reporting comes in. After you get to know the subject of your profile, don’t stop there. Pick the brains of his/her friends, enemies, family, colleagues and students. Sometimes those stories show a side of your subject you wouldn’t otherwise see.

An attorney representing Gladys in a successful lawsuit to halt a proposed dove hunting season recalled how his client lectured the unsuspecting judge. When his honor admonished Gladys to concisely answer her counsel’s questions rather than drift into “speeches,” Gladys castigated both the lawyer and the judge: “But he’s not asking the RIGHT questions!”

Gladys was fearless as she was feisty and certainly not intimidated by titles or authorities. Former Iowa Gov. Robert Ray recalled her confronting him in his office at the state capitol. Gladys stormed past his startled staff and proceeded to scold the chief executive for not being tough enough on polluters and slob hunters.

“She didn’t hesitate to express her opinion,” Ray said.

Gladys might seem like a slam dunk when it comes to profile writing, but even seemingly ordinary folks may reveal extraordinary life experiences that can shape an intriguing profile. To capture your audience, write tight, with descriptive, active quotes and descriptions to paint the picture. It’s journalism 101.

Take Sylvan T. Runkel, whom I met by chance when a colleague suggested that “Sy” might be a good source for a story on wildflowers. Turns out that Sylvan’s passion for nature stemmed from boyhood summers spent with his maternal grandmother in her log cabin in southern Illinois about 1910. From that humble beginning, he eventually co-authored three Iowa wildflower guides.

I didn’t just learn about wildflowers from him. It took only a little probing to get him to share the horrific, near-death story of his D-Day glider crash at Normandy, which left him with a stiff-legged limp and ever-present walking stick. You learn these things about a person’s history when you ask questions about their life, or even what they are wearing. Turns out Sylvan’s ratty old ranger’s hat was a proud souvenir of his 1933 job as superintendent of the first CCC camp in Iowa.

Conversations with colleagues revealed even more about Sy’s character. On a field trip to visit a natural area, Sy and the state ecologist were aghast to see tiling machines and bulldozers turning the site into yet another cornfield.

His companion was livid, grumbling obscenities about a landowner who would wantonly destroy rare species and habitats. Sylvan likewise detested the loss, but, the ecologist recounted, the worst he could say about the landowner was, “Dag nabit! I think he’s on the wrong track!”

Another excursion brought a happier outcome and also gave insight into Sylvan’s personality. He and his friend asked a widow’s permission to explore her secluded woodland.

When they returned from the exhausting hike, exclaiming about the pristine valley’s unusual plants and spring-fed creek, the woman invited them in for pie and socializing. A few weeks later, the men’s delight at the discovery of the site was compounded by a letter from the landowner’s attorney, deeding the land to the state for a preserve. Sylvan and his passion for natural communities had charmed the woman.

Sylvan’s hat, walking stick and gentle manner mesmerized grade-schoolers, who trooped beside him. They relished his anecdotes about how plant and animal “citizens” were of the same natural world as the students themselves. He’d tease the kids with a shout of “Rattlesnake!” if he happened upon a woodland rattlesnake fern or prairie rattlesnake master.

OK, so everyone may not be as colorful or quotable or unusual as Sylvan Runkel or Gladys Black, but you don’t know until you ask a few questions.

Most people we write about share a love of the outdoors. Describe how that love blossomed. Grandpa took them fishing? They watched birds at a feeder outside the kitchen window? A teacher praised their butterfly collection?

Hone your investigative reporting skills, then use anecdotes, quotes and descriptions to paint the picture. It’s journalism 101. To capture your audience, write tight, with descriptive, active verbs. Or no verb at all.

“RA T TLESNAKE!”

— Larry Stone, who joined OWAA in 1972, was elected to the Circle of Chiefs in 2016. He spent 25 years as outdoor writer/photographer with the Des Moines Register. He’s been semi-retired since 1997, but continues his quest in search of characters.
Mastering bird-in-flight photography

BY W.H. “CHIP” GROSS | FREDERICKTOWN, OHIO

AS A WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER, I sometimes envy wedding photographers. They take photos of brides who usually don’t try and run away before you’ve got the shot.

If wildlife photography is a college course, then bird photography — especially capturing birds in flight — is graduate school.

I’ve been practicing birds-in-flight photography for only the past several years, but what I have learned is that it is possible — given the right gear, technique, and persistence — to produce tack-sharp flight photos while hand-holding long lenses. Here’s how it’s done.

THE RIGHT GEAR

This specialized photography requires a camera and lens capable of not only focusing quickly, but then locking onto a moving subject and staying focused on it as the photographer pans the camera. A continuous-autofocus feature on your camera is a must. To catch birds in flight you’ll also need at least a 300mm lens.

My current choice for bird flight photography is a Canon EOS 7D Mark II camera digital single reflex body. It is designed specifically for action sports and wildlife photography. I match it with the Canon EF 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6L IS II USM zoom lens.

Often, I’ll place a 1.4x teleconverter between the camera and lens for some extra “reach,” giving me a total focal length of 560mm. This does mean you forfeit one f-stop of light.

THE RIGHT SETTINGS

In setting up the camera for flight photography, I shoot at a shutter speed of at least 1/2,000 of a second, if not faster, depending upon the amount of available light. I open up the lens to its largest f-stop, and set the ISO to automatic.

THE RIGHT TECHNIQUE

Choose a sunny day and approach your subject with the sun at your back and your shadow pointing directly at the bird. When the bird flies, wait until it fills about half of your camera’s viewfinder, then press the shutter button halfway down to acquire focus. Once focus is acquired, shoot a burst of shots while keeping the bird centered in the camera’s viewfinder (easier said than done).

Start by photographing large, slow-flying birds such as pelicans. Once you have some success, move on to birds the size of pheasants, then songbirds. No doubt your greatest test will be hummingbirds.

Capturing images of birds in flight is a challenge, but when mastered will give you a great sense of satisfaction. But best of all, flight shots sell.

— Ohioan W.H. “Chip” Gross is a longtime OWAA member, previous member of the OWAA board of directors and winner of several Excellence in Craft awards. Contact him at whchipgross@gmail.com.
How to work from home
Change your clothes, adopt a Chia Pet and other tips for living the dream

BY CHRISTINE PETERSON
NEWCASTLE, WYOMING

When I started working from home eight years ago, I relished the opportunity to wake up, throw on sweats and never change out of them. I had spent years sitting in a cubicle in uncomfortable shoes and wrinkle-free pants that needed to be ironed. I was ready to be done. So I rotated through the same two sweatshirts I’d acquired sometime in college and yoga pants that I never wore for yoga and only changed to leave the house to run, hike or ski.

It was great.

I was living the dream, writing in my home office in bare feet, padding between my computer and kitchen for coffee or snacks whenever I wanted.

Then my husband came home one day after work and muttered something about how I might consider washing my sweatshirt. I looked down at food speckled on the front and realized there’s a fine line between living the dream and becoming a slob.

I also realized the more I embraced dressing like a teenage boy, the less productive I was at my computer. I spent more time standing in the kitchen staring out the window with my hand in a bag of chips and less time actually writing.

I vowed that day to force myself to dress like an adult every day — and leave the house. In the seven years since, I’ve (largely) stayed on track. It’s helped me focus more on my job, and elicited fewer side glances from my husband.

Working from home is different for each person, but I assembled a handful of tips I’ve gleaned from others or realized on my own for anyone transitioning from cubicle to kitchen table.

SET A SCHEDULE

Working from home means you can do everything — or nothing — over the course of your day. It’s ok to throw in a load of laundry or feed the dog. After all, you don’t have coworkers to chat with about weekend plans or kids’ sporting events. But each evening before I am done I write a schedule of what I want to accomplish the following day and when. It allows me to hit work goals while also balancing other responsibilities.

WORKING FROM HOME MEANS YOU CAN DO EVERYTHING — OR NOTHING — OVER THE COURSE OF YOUR DAY.

WORK WHEN YOU’RE WORKING AND ENJOY YOUR BREAKS

Go ahead, lace your shoes up and go for that run or walk over lunch instead of eating at your desk. And when you get back, work. It’s easy to spend the whole day sitting in front of your screen. It allows you to respond quickly to editors and employers. It keeps you connected. But it can also suck the life out of you and result in hours of mindless scrolling with little to show for it. Make sure you are giving yourself time to get outside to up your productivity inside.

CREATE YOUR OWN COLLEAGUES.

For most of my work-from-home career, I had co-workers at a newspaper I could call for brainstorming or talking through stories. Now that I’m on my own, I found it’s even more important to cultivate a group of people I can reach out to when I hit writing or reporting blocks. Network at places like OWAA conferences or scour the directory for people you see who also freelance or work remotely. Put yourself out there and make your own co-workers to help inject fresh eyes, insights and ideas into your work.

GET A DOG, OR SOMETHING

Let’s face it, working from home can be lonely. If dogs aren’t your thing, think about getting a cat, hamster, goldfish or Chia Pet. As outdoor communicators, we’re largely social beasts now relegated to hovels in our homes. Company helps. While my yellow Labrador doesn’t do much for me as a copy editor, his big, soulful eyes reassure me everything will be fine, and his need to get outside helps me with tip No.2.

RELOCATE

The beauty of working out of sight of your boss (or bosses), with the added luxury of cell phones and hot spots, is that you really can work from anywhere. If you find yourself doing more pacing in your living room and less working at your computer, try moving somewhere else: a coffee shop, the front yard, a park or a rock on a trail. If the internet is distracting you, go somewhere without service and focus — and get in a hike while you’re there.

— Christine Peterson

Christine Peterson has spent the last eight years writing about the outdoors from her home in Wyoming for newspapers and magazines including the Casper Star-Tribune, Outdoor Life, Bugle and others. When she’s not wandering around her house, she’s chasing her toddler and yellow Labrador, fishing, hunting or camping.
Transitioning to full-time freelance

BY KELSEY ROSETH | DULUTH, MINNESOTA

TEN YEARS AGO, I prepared to take this reputedly epic hike near Bozeman, Montana. Coming from a less-than-adventurous childhood, I expected it to be my hardest hike yet.

I got my gear ready, drove to the trailhead and enthusiastically set foot on the dusty path.

Whoa, was I unprepared.

Nine hours later, I was lost, dehydrated and hungrily drinking water from a stream — Giardia be damned. Eventually, I found my way and after another five hours of rough hiking, I returned to my vehicle exhausted, but also victorious.

That hike taught me a few things — mainly how thorough preparation is never the same as experience. Life looks different when you stop preparing and put it into practice.

Today, I feel as though I’m on that first taxing hike again. I recently transitioned from working full time and freelancing on the side to full-time freelancing. While I do my best to celebrate each small success, I’m still hopelessly unready for the realities of running a business. No amount of reading could have prepared me for this, and I’ve finally decided that’s okay.

For those considering a similar transition, here’s my best advice.

THOUGHTFULLY FORM YOUR BUSINESS.

Determine your trajectory from the get-go. Study up on operating as a sole proprietor or limited liability corporation (LLC) and set your goals. There are pros and cons to each setup, so take time and think carefully. I chose to put this decision off and it ended up causing a major headache when I finally settled on creating an LLC.

IDENTIFY YOUR NICHE.

Take a good hard look at your personality and experience, likes and dislikes. Try StrengthsFinder or another personality assessment. Use that information to create a custom list of what you want to do and stick to it. I tried to cast a wide net at first, writing about everything possible, and guess what? It didn’t work. I was more confident, a better writer and happier overall when working in a niche. On the plus side, working a niche often pays more, too.

STAY SOCIAL.

Once you get over the immediate excitement of working remotely from your favorite coffee shop or freshly decorated home office, the loneliness and isolation of freelancing hits hard. To truly enjoy the flexibility of freelancing and protect your mental health, schedule social activities, and get out to network or volunteer.

KEEP UP THOSE CONNECTIONS.

Business can come from anywhere. Realize that many of the people you interact with regularly — gym friends, Starbucks baristas and old acquaintances — may be interested in what you’re up to and genuinely willing to help grow your business. People I would have never expected ended up securing my services or recommending me to others. Try to find a way to repay the favor, and always send a thank you card. And never stop making new friends and connections. It’s work, but it’s good for you and the business.

YOU’RE THE BOSS. ACT LIKE IT.

It’s time to be your best self. Now is not the time to sleep in late, flake out on friends or otherwise indulge in the weakest parts of your personality. I’m guilty of those indulgences, and many more, and I’m working hard to change. My personal actions reflect on my business, and I’ll be damned if I fail because I was simply too lazy to address my flaws.

GET CREATIVE WHEN SEARCHING FOR LEADS.

I search for leads everywhere. Keep an eye out on community boards, Facebook groups, Craigslist categories, social media platforms, the newspaper and anywhere else a business may search for help. Not everyone utilizes each means of advertising to its fullest potential. Also, try being brave. If you notice an area where a publication or business can improve, let them know. I’ve found businesses often are pleased to receive a polite email sharing tips for their enhancement. While searching, please avoid content mills or other exploitative businesses. They pay pennies, and you deserve better than that.

FOLLOW THE RULES AND BE RESPONSIBLE.

It’s easy to become complacent when no one is looking over your shoulder to monitor your work. You’re the boss, and it’s your responsibility to make sure things are done right. Pay your taxes quarterly. Don’t underreport your income. Stick to a schedule. Keep your appointments. Work hard to please your clients and try to never miss a deadline.

RECORD EVERYTHING.

This is my most important piece of advice. Remember, business fluctuates. That fresh excitement from your first big client and the devastation of your earliest major mistake fades fast. Make sure you record your milestones, the lessons you’ve learned, the things you’re proud of and the things you’re not. You’ll sustain and be successful in this business if you can look back, learn from your mistakes and remember what makes freelancing worth it.

— Kelsey Roseth is a freelance multimedia journalist and writer based in Duluth, Minnesota, and the most recent recipient of OWAA’s Madson Fellowship. Her bylines have appeared in Birds & Blooms, Culture Trip, Northern Wilds, Minnesota Women’s Press, Forum Communications/Duluth News Tribune, Make it Minnesota and Culture Trip.
Sending successful pitches

BY JOSEPH ALBANESE
VALLEY STREAM, NEW YORK

EARLY EVERY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT knows the trials and tribulations of the children left marooned on a deserted island by a crashed wartime transport plane in “Lord of the Flies.” But William Golding’s manuscript was rejected 20 times before someone published the now iconic novel.

This story is now considered a classic, but scores of editors passed over it. Perhaps they didn’t recognize Golding’s talent. Perhaps they didn’t see the book as economically viable. Perhaps they were cranky because they missed lunch.

Having a great story doesn’t guarantee that it will be published — it’s only one part of the puzzle. In the last issue of OU I shared some advice on researching a topic and preparing to pitch. Here are a few tips for the next steps, crafting that query and hitting send.

MANUSCRIPT VS. QUERY

The decision whether to send a finished piece or a query can be a tough one. There are some advantages to turning in a completed story.

If this is your first contact with the publication it can be the difference between getting a check and having your email deleted. With a completed manuscript in hand, the editor knows exactly what they are getting — and how much work it needs to be a perfect fit the publication.

But, because you’re tailoring the piece to the specific outlet, this can mean you are sitting on a document that will need to be seriously reworked before you try it somewhere else if the editor you originally send it to doesn’t bite. Even worse, it’s a lot of unpaid work if no one buys the story. But nothing ventured, nothing gained.

You still need to write an insightful email if you want an editor to read your story. Rare is the editor who will take the time to review every piece that comes across their desk; even rarer is one who will go over 1,400 words if the associated note reads simply “See attached.”

You may not need to flesh things out as fully, but give them a reason to use up some of their already limited time. Paint an abbreviated picture, with just enough detail to create intrigue enough to open the attached document.

ONE AT A TIME, PLEASE

It is generally considered uncouth to submit the same pitch to multiple outlets at the same time, especially if your end goal is a bidding war. A stunt like that is certainly to annoy both editors.

It is tempting to send a pitch to every outlet you think may be interested in your idea, but you’re really doing yourself a disservice with this approach. The pitch should be tailored to the publication. A generic pitch won’t make it to the top of the pile. And rest assured that editors talk to each other. If you are sending your pitch everywhere, people will find out.

THE HOOK

Your email with your pitch must shine, especially if it’s your first communication with the editor.

The old adage of “show, don’t tell” is of paramount importance. Set the scene, thoroughly illustrating what you are going to write, who you are going to interview and what the story is about. Be descriptive, but brief. Many editors have little time to read queries.

You may end up putting as much work into the pitch as you do the article itself, but this email is like an audition where you showcase your writing.

WHO ARE YOU?

While you should let the content be the star, you also need to introduce yourself and provide a brief biography. If you are an avid reader of the magazine, feel free to mention that. This is also where you establish your credibility for the intended work. “I have been guiding on Lake Texoma for the last 28 years and caught the record channel cat for the lake in 1997,” would certainly give you authority on seasonal movements of catfish in that body of water.

SPELLING COUNTS

I have a bucket next to my desk. It’s where I toss all of the comma splices, antecedent issues and homonyms I come across. Hopefully someone will start a recycling program someday and I can cash each in for a nickel to augment my retirement income. Don’t subject the editor to any of these. If you can’t be bothered to put your best foot forward before you get the assignment, how are you going to behave when you get the work order in hand?

TUESDAY

When your letter hits the inbox has a lot to do with whether or not it will get read. This is purely anecdotal, but I seem to get the most positive responses from queries sent on Tuesdays; and more specifically right after lunch. Inboxes are often inundated after the weekend, so if you fire off an email on Saturday it is likely to get lost in the pile. Wait too long into the week and fatigue sets in.

Don’t worry if you get an out-of-office reply; all is not lost. You just need to be patient. If they say they will be back on Monday the 11th, don’t resend until Tuesday the 26th.

That mass of unread email grew exponentially in their absence, so be patient, and re-send the original pitch with a couple of new lines in the beginning explaining that you had previously sent it when they were out. A little small talk doesn’t hurt here; if they said they were chasing cutthroats high in the mountains, ask them how they did. Open-ended

SEE SAMPLE PITCHES

See several pitches Joseph Albanese wrote and sold at https://owaa.org/file/pitch-samples-freelance-resources.pdf.
Simple steps to revise your story

BY JAZZIE JOHNSON
MISSOULA, MONTANA

REG SCHWIPPS TELLS his creative writing students at DePaw University to visit a restaurant to improve their writing skills. He instructs them to identify 50 scents while in the restaurant. After writing down about 10 smells, the task becomes difficult. It forces them to notice the smallest details, like the smell of the salt in the salt shaker.

And paying attention to details matters, both in writing and in revisions.

Writing is often the part of the craft that gets the most attention, but revision is its own form of art. Don’t let that intimidate you.

Schwipps shared a few simple things you can do to clean up your copy at OWAA’s June conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Here’s what he said.

TAKE TWO DAYS.
It’s best to walk away from a piece before it’s truly done. A terrible piece on Monday may be better on Tuesday. Give yourself a day or two and come back to read it with fresh eyes.

READ WITH YOUR EARS.
Print your work and read it out loud instead of trying to read it on a screen. Listen for repeated words or awkward phrases and mark up the printed copy. Microsoft Word also reads back text by selecting the speak command option.

OMIT NEEDLESS WORDS.
Cut every word not adding something meaningful to your work. Adverbs and words replacing “said” can almost always be deleted.

CONSIDER YOUR AUDIENCE.
Create a typical reader for your story in your head. Does your story give the maximum impact for that person?

GET ORGANIZED.
Think of your story as a series of scenes. Then think about the organization of those scenes. Each scene should flow into the next as though you were watching the story in movie form.

CALL A FRIEND.
Use a trusted reader who can give advice on what does and doesn’t work in your story.

REREAD NOTES FROM YOUR EDITORS.
After the edits from your editor, do you still think the piece covers what you wanted it to cover? Don’t overthink too much — at some point you will have to turn it in.

— Jazzie Johnson is a journalism major and environmental studies minor at the University of Montana and an intern for OWAA.

Continued from previous page
questions encourage dialogue, and taking an interest in anyone on a personal level is generally appreciated.

FOLLOW UP
This is the most overlooked aspect of pitching. So often we hit “send” and let our words go into cyberspace without a second thought. This is a huge mistake.

Many editors have a folder in which they keep pitches they plan to look at later, but that second look often gets pushed aside with other demands for their time. A gentle reminder can sometimes nudge an editor back in the direction of your query. Just be polite and don’t act accusatorially.

If you do get a negative response, ask why it wasn’t a good fit. This is a golden opportunity to get an insight into the publication. It also starts a dialogue with the editor, which may mean your email gets opened a little quicker the next time you submit something.

IF AT FIRST YOU DON’T SUCEED
Sometimes an unanswered query can feel like a personal affront. But odds are the editor is simply so busy your pitch slipped through the cracks or they didn’t have time to respond.

Persistence usually pays off in the long run. Pitch them again. Approach each submission as a blank slate and keep at it.

People don’t become writers to become millionaires. They love what they do and will often help others. Don’t be scared to ask for advice from those with more experience. Many people took time to point me in the right direction and hopefully I have done the same for some of you.

Fair winds and tight lines.

— Joseph Albanese's tenure in natural resources has taken him from the shadow of the Empire State Building to the Alaskan bush, with experiences as varied as the terrain. He now works as an outdoor communicator, creating text and video for publications including Field & Stream, Outdoor Life and The FlyFish Journal.
Diversify your source list

BY JAZZIE JOHNSON | MISSOULA, MONTANA

CONDUCT A QUICK MENTAL AUDIT. Think back to sources in your stories and the subjects of your photos. Sort them out by race, gender and even age. Are there certain demographics left out or outnumbered in your work? Do your sources match the demographics of your city or area? Stories should not only reflect the community, they should also include sources with different perspectives and backgrounds.

Many marginalized communities do not see themselves represented accurately in media coverage, especially outdoor media. This can bring a sense of not belonging, intimidation and distrust. When communities see themselves as experts or sources in stories they are usually underrepresented in, many will feel the topic is within their grasp, possible and welcoming.

It is tough to include sources of different backgrounds, especially if you cover an industry like aviation that is dominated by white males, said Benét Wilson, an aviation and travel journalist. But as the editor-in-chief of Aviation Queen, and a self-described “journalism diversity champion,” she works to put forward more diverse writers and sources.

Letting diversity come naturally to publications is not working, Wilson said.

“If you’re networking with people you already know, how are you going to find journalists or sources of color?” she said.

Here are tips Wilson offered to break out of your bubble and diversify your source list.

NO MORE EXCUSES.

Journalists need to go out of their comfort zones in order to achieve inclusivity and diversity in their work.

“Lots of people tend to go to sources they already know,” Wilson said. “It’s easy, and sometimes they’re lazy.”

Wilson isn’t saying she supports tokenism, but if you are looking for a source and one option is a white male and the other is a Latina woman and they both have the same level of expertise, there’s nothing wrong with choosing the woman to get a new voice or fresh perspective in your story.

SOCIAL MEDIA IS KEY.

Facebook groups like Black Travel Bloggers Network is a fantastic resource for finding different voices and experts in travel, Wilson said.

There are also other Facebook groups with expertise that make great resources. Just search keywords, ask around and someone will help find a suitable source. (Also see page 18 for a list of groups promoting outdoor recreation to people of color, women and those in the LGBTQ community.)

Wilson also created the #MediaDiversity hashtag for Twitter. The hashtag features hundreds of posts where journalists can find new sources and make connections.

USE EVERY TOOL IN YOUR ARSENAL.

Familiarize yourself with local and national groups that may have smaller initiatives specific to an underrepresented group.

The National Association of Black Journalists, National Association of Hispanic Journalists, Native American Journalists Association, Association of LGBTQ Journalists, Asian American Journalists Association and many others have resources and opportunities for networking.

Contact the nearest Outdoor Afro chapter, Brown People Fishing group or other organizations promoting diversity in the outdoors to include a different perspective. Once you talk to one of these sources, ask them if they could recommend other people to talk to, and suddenly your source circle is expanding. But remember, do not use these sources only for stories about minorities doing outdoor activities or any other story showcasing a racial or minority topic. People of color and people of the LGBTQ community have expertise and interest in many other topics. If you need to interview climbers for a story, reach out to someone from Brothers of Climbing, a group for climbers of color.

Ask for a directory of professors and their specialties at historically black colleges and universities and familiarize yourself with them. Go to public lectures at these universities, mingle and make connections.

Use the Women’s Media Center’s SheSource, a database of expert women. Just search a keyword or area of expertise, and dozens of women show up with biographies, experience and contact information.

BE HUMBLE.

This year, National Geographic apologized for their decades of coverage that showcased people of color in stereotypical ways around the world. It’s hard to admit you’ve been wrong in the past, but it’s also a way to move forward.

Engage with different communities. Go to their events. “Show up and make a donation,” Wilson said. “It costs money, but you have to show interest.”

That doesn’t mean you are going to write about whatever group is hosting the event, but by going you meet the people in that community.

When engaging with sources different from yourself, be humble and keep in mind your own privileges.

— Jazzie Johnson is studying journalism at the University of Montana and hopes to be an investigative journalist like her hero Ida B. Wells. In the meantime she is working to promote diversity in outdoor media and is an OWAA intern.
Far too often, we hear people complain against cutting of old-growth forest. We can all appreciate the majesty of a towering oak grove, or a plantation pine stand, but that same wooded canopy does little to support wildlife. Young forests are vital to the preservation of many species, and creating those habitats can be costly.

Companies like Weyerhaeuser are partnering with state wildlife agencies to fulfill strategic timber cutting goals that meet their business objectives, but ultimately create young successional habitats in a carefully managed program.

So, the next time you head down to the lumber yard, remember that buying engineered wood products can have a profound impact on wildlife sustainability.

—Dave Veldman

*images adapted from 2017 Ruffed Grouse Society Magazine article*
TOP LEFT: Logs are loaded from the stockyard at a cutting site in central Michigan.


BOTTOM RIGHT: Logs are collected at a site in central Michigan in 2016.

BOTTOM LEFT: New growth begins almost immediately after trees are cut in central Michigan. The image is part of a conservation project that highlights how consumer products aid in sustainable forest management.

LEFT: Wood flies as a cutter works on a log in central Michigan in 2016.
IRA giving offers tax incentives

By Bill Powell | Columbia, Missouri

A unique opportunity exists to help organizations like OWAA and also reduce your taxes if you are over 70½ and have an IRA. If you meet those criteria, you may transfer up to $100,000 per year from your IRA to a qualified charity such as OWAA, and doing so is better than a deduction on your income taxes in some ways.

Such transfers made directly from the IRA to the charity reduce or entirely relieve your obligation to include in your taxable income the “required minimum distribution” that must be made annually from your IRA once you are older than 70½. This reduction in your taxable income may keep you in a lower bracket and allow you to avoid some tacked-on taxes for those with higher incomes.

Tax code changes that became effective Jan. 1 reduced the value of charitable deductions, making a direct transfer of IRA assets to a charity an even better financial option. You don’t have to qualify to take itemized deductions in order to reap these tax benefits.

No matter the amount of your required minimum distribution, the limit for IRA diversions is $100,000.

There aren’t any restrictions on how much you can withdraw from an IRA after you are 59½, but all the amounts, wherever they go, must be included in your income for that year until you are 70½. Then you can send up to $100,000 a year from the IRA to a charity without including it in your income. The terminology to use with your IRA representative if you wish to do this is “charitable rollover” or “qualified charitable distribution.”

Transfers of IRA assets to charities are wise tax planning in another way. Individuals have to pay federal and state income taxes, but charities do not. If you or your beneficiaries withdraw IRA assets, they are subject to federal and state income taxation at “ordinary income” rates.

If a charity receives the funds, they are worth 100 percent of the stated value, while if you or a beneficiary withdraw and keep the money, it’s likely only worth between 57 and 70 percent of the stated value.

If you plan to make a charitable donation, the biggest bang for your buck is likely diversification of funds from your IRA directly to the charity.

This is not personal legal or tax advice. Charitable rollovers are a little tricky and should be done only with good personal accounting or legal advice.

Bill Powell has been OWAA’s legal counsel for over 20 years, and assisted with that work for 17 years before that. He practices law in Columbia, Missouri, and does some writing and photography about outdoors topics such as mountaineering, international travel, backpacking, fishing, hunting and other topics. He received OWAA’s Ham Brown Award in 2005 and is the author of the "Legal Handbook for Freelancers."
Forging a new way to fight fire

Rep. Westerman proposes legislation to change forest management

BY GREGG PATTERSON
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

T’S MAY 31, 2018, and I’m driving to work. The news report from National Public Radio announces that Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico are all under a severe forest fire watch. The Southwest has experienced its driest winter, and its forested land is ready to burst aflame like gasoline to a lit match. Here we go again. Another fire season is upon us.


Westerman claims the bill, which still needs Senate approval, will improve forest management on nearly half a billion acres of public and tribal lands. It’s his attempt to revamp how our national forests are managed and, in particular, manage them to deal with what’s become a national emergency caused by overwhelmingly destructive wildfires.

According to Westerman’s congressional website, he is the “only licensed” forester in Congress, a legislative body that includes 535 members in the House and Senate. He earned a master’s degree in forestry from Yale University. He sits on the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources and is concerned at what he sees as the mismanagement of public forestland.

“There’s a great need for us to do something different on our federal lands in how our timber is managed,” Westerman said. “I’ve even reflected and wondered what Roosevelt and Pinchot would think if they could see what’s become of what they created with the Forest Service and our federal timber management.”

The congressman knows his history. President Teddy Roosevelt created the U.S. Forest Service in 1905 and put his close friend Gifford Pinchot, himself a trained forester, in charge of the new agency. The idea was to manage the nation’s forestland (including wildlife, fish and water) in a science-based manner as the renewable resource it is. This was necessary, because industrialist timber barons had cut down thousands of square miles of forests without replanting trees, damaging fish and wildlife populations and polluting streams and lakes.

Pinchot believed the purpose of the Forest Service was “…to provide the greatest amount of good for the greatest amount of people in the long run.”

Westerman believes Pinchot’s noble purpose isn’t being adhered to and forest management is out of whack. The Forest Service has to continually fight massive fires and is often delayed or stopped from efficiently managing the nation’s timber resources in a way that would reduce the negative impact of those fires. His bill is designed to give the Forest Service the flexibility and timely tools necessary to reduce fires and their damaging effects.

“It’s really a shame that we’ve got a treasured national resource that we’re failing to properly manage,” Westerman said.

Without scientific forest management, tree stands grow too dense and become prone to insect infestation and disease. This creates increased fuel that feeds catastrophic fires that burn hotter and faster on larger tracts of lands. The fires pollute the air and water and damage wildlife habitat, he said.

During the last 25 years, the U.S. Forest Service’s budget has dramatically shifted away from spending money on managing for healthy, productive forests to one burdened by, and heavily dedicated to, putting out fires.

In 1995, only 15 percent of the Forest Service budget was needed to quell fires. The 2018 budget calls for more than 52 percent of its budget for fighting wildfires. A 2015 U.S. Department of Agriculture report projects that number is expected to increase to 67 percent -- $2 out of every $3 spent on wildfires — by 2025.

It doesn’t have to be that way, Westerman said. But the agency needs to shift its focus to prevention.

Westerman’s bill focuses on expediting and improving forest management practices under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 on national forests, Bureau of Land Management and Tribal forestland that is fire-prone.

Present laws result in an onerous process of courtrooms, extensive legal fees, challenges by environmental groups, delays and more delays that are expensive and create a management gridlock, for which fires don’t wait, Westerman said.

Westerman’s bill would allow for arbitration hearings settled within 90 days, limit public challenges to removing the dangerous fuel loads, yet still require the streamlined process to remain within the scope set by individual forest plans already developed with extensive public input. Some environmental groups

Continued on page 19
Reimagining the outdoor recreationist

Groups work to foster outdoor opportunities for everyone

BY JAZZIE JOHNSON
MISSOULA, MONTANA

Danielle Williams knows she doesn’t look like a typical skydiver. Williams is trying to change those perceptions and make the outdoors more welcoming to people who don’t fit the stereotype of a typical outdoor enthusiast or adventure athlete.

On their Instagram account, @nativewomenswilderness, they share stories from Native members hiking, climbing, doing yoga and fishing.

OUTDOOR ASIAN https://www.outdoorasian.com/

Christopher Chalaka created the nationwide organization Outdoor Asian to connect Asians and Pacific Islanders to the outdoors. The group organizes a variety of outdoor trips with activities like building sandcastles, mushroom hunting or any other outdoor activity members want to try. It also offers leadership workshops to promote inclusion and connections for future leaders.

OUT THERE ADVENTURES http://www.outthereadventures.org/

Getting outside has plenty of benefits like anxiety and stress relief, better performance in academics and increased optimism. Out There Adventures, based in Seattle, uses these benefits to work on identity, leadership and empowerment of queer youth. The organization has events.
in the Pacific Northwest, California, Minneapolis and Denver. This year, Out There Adventures is creating LGBTQ trips for adults out of Seattle.

FAT GIRLS HIKING https://fatgirlshiking.com/
Summer, who doesn’t share her last name publicly to avoid harassment, did not always love hiking. It took a few times before she appreciated the strength she felt while on the trail. She founded Fat Girls Hiking to organize body-positive hiking groups for all skill levels and for everyone — not just those who are overweight. The group gives advice and resources on hiking, where to find plus-size gear and body positivity. Fat Girls Hiking is based in Portland, Oregon, but has chapters in Tennessee, Seattle and Minneapolis and is working on creating more.

LATINXHIKERS https://www.latinxhikers.com/
Adriana Garcia’s and Luz Lituma’s Instagram page, @latinx-hikers, began to grow when they posted stories of themselves and other Latinx (gender-neutral word for people of Latin American descent) in the outdoors. Based in Atlanta, the two best friends have told stories on their platform since 2017. They document various hikes from trekking Machu Picchu to exploring the trails of Tennessee and explain big issues like public lands and why they are important.

OUTDOOR AFRO http://outdoorafro.com/
Rue Mapp created Outdoor Afro because she was tired of being the only black person on a bike ride or hike and she knew others in the black community felt the same way. Outdoor Afro leaders now organize outdoor activities from bike trips to environmental stewardship projects in 26 different states.

GREENING YOUTH FOUNDATION https://www.gyfoundation.org/
Angelou Ezeilo created the Greening Youth Foundation to provide environmental education and stewardship projects for underserved youth across the country and in West Africa. The organization provides conservation internships and career opportunities for young adults by partnering with the National Park Service, the Forest Service and outdoor retailers like Patagonia and Columbia.

— Jazie Johnson is a journalism major and environmental studies minor at the University of Montana and an intern for OWAA.
Perfecting the pitch: Adventure Cyclist magazine

BY JAZZIE JOHNSON | MISSOULA, MONTANA

Every year Alex Strickland sifts through up to 250 pitches from freelancers hoping to sell him stories for Adventure Cyclist magazine. Of those, up to 20 will make it into the magazine and he’ll use another 20 to 30 online.

The niche publication focuses on bicycle travel. Many of the stories are long-form with high-quality, professional photos. The magazine, which prints nine times a year, is mailed to the Adventure Cycling Association’s more than 50,000 members.

It is one of the top bicycling magazines in the nation, with subscribers all over the world, and its content is created almost exclusively by freelancers. Strickland works with up to 50 freelance writers, photographers, illustrators and mapmakers to create a mix of travel stories, blogs, how-tos, gear and technical stories.

For the magazine’s submission guidelines, visit https://www.adventurecycling.org/adventure-cyclist/adventure-cyclist-submissions/. And read on for tips Strickland shared with Outdoors Unlimited on how to land your story in the magazine.

What’s unique about Adventure Cyclist?
Bicycling is a niche, and adventure bicycling is a niche within a niche. There is a community of super-nerds who are into it. There’s an even smaller community who are capable writers and photographers. About 60 to 70 percent of contributors are professionals and 30 to 40 percent are amateurs. Some years, it’s pro-heavy and other years it’s member heavy.

You said you get a decent number of pitches every year. Do you ever seek out new contributors?
I have a decent budget and if I see someone’s work in a magazine and I like it, I will email or call them and ask if they have any ideas for me. I tell them, “I will pay you reasonably well and on time.”

Do you have a certain length you prefer pitches to be? I don’t. I’m fine with a long manuscript too. The exception would be someone sends in their unedited, 12,000-word journal. I’m not psyched about that, but it’s pretty rare.

What makes a story a no for you, besides their idea already being published?
Our rule is no one-day rides. They do have to be multi-day trips.

What makes a great pitch for Adventure Cyclist?
It’s someone crafting a pitch and demonstrating that they’ve seen the magazine. It’s amazing how infrequently that happens. If someone says, “I want to do this in the style of story X in December’s issue and it looks like you haven’t covered it yet,” I am 10 times more interested. Of the 150 contributors that we don’t know, five probably do that. We run some essays. I want to see the whole manuscript of those. I love queries for features. We usually tell people that if we’re interested, we’re scheduling stories 12 to 18 months out.

Perfecting the pitch: Adventure Cyclist magazine
If they went and tried shooting with the intent, they could have done it, but they didn’t.

Q: How do you go about telling them that?

A: Badly. I probably complain about this every day.

Our guidelines say we will not accept submissions from smartphones. The fact is, a professional can probably get great stuff with a smartphone and we’d probably run it, but if you (amateurs) shot it with your phone, you probably aren’t shooting at the level we want. We typically tell them the story had potential, but you have to up your photo game.

If you usually ride your bike 80 miles a day, maybe you can only ride 50 miles because you have to stop and screw with a tripod to get good photos. That’s what it takes and that’s what professionals do.

Q: Is there a story that you feel is over-pitched?

A: Not really. We do get pitched a lot of stories from the Pacific Northwest and the Himalayas. Any photos from there are probably going to be bonkers and adventurous. We can only run so many of those. We are an American organization and we run things from all over the world, but we do try to keep a balance.

Q: Is there a story you wish someone would submit?

A: We are always looking for really well photographed touring stories from the U.S. Especially outside the Rockies. Bring me a well-shot, well-written story in Georgia, or Ohio, a less interesting place.

Q: How do you keep stories fresh in a magazine all about cycling?

A: We’re bad at that. There is a predictable story structure and narrative. Most travel logs are chronological, which can get a little repetitious and hard to avoid.

The biggest challenge is getting a diversity of voices. We know exactly who our audience is. We know most of our members are 60-something white guys. As a result, it makes sense that a majority of our pitches come from 60-something white guys. We have to find the balance of not being an echo chamber because there are other people out there doing this. We have to look for younger writers, photographers, female contributors, people of color and people from different communities. People call us out on it too, which helps. It gives you a chance to look back and go, “Wow, the last couple months have been really dude-heavy.”

What is one of your favorite stories you’ve run and why?

We ran a story last fall by this guy named Tyler Metcalf who quit a job at National Geographic, which is not a job I would quit. He was going to bike across the country and do a story for us. He emailed me saying he got hit by a car and that he was pretty banged up. He takes two months off to recuperate and then gets back on the road to finish the trip, and he wrote this great story. It generated a ton of response. We don’t get a ton of reader response, but we get more now than we used to. Some people thought it was great and real. Other people asked why we were scaring people away. That’s what I like about that story, too. It created an interesting discussion among readers. I’d much rather have someone hate something than not care at all.

Jazzie Johnson is studying journalism and environmental studies at the University of Montana. She hopes to be an investigative journalist like her hero Ida B. Wells, but in the meantime she is working to promote diversity in journalism and outdoor media and is an OWAA intern.
Photographer Keith Crowley sat in a Land Rover in Tanzania for four hours waiting for the cheetah to hunt. It was January 2017 and Crowely’s first trip to Tanzania. His driver, Marando Shauri, knew where the cheetahs were and predicted, if they were patient, they’d see the animals in action.

The patience paid off when the Ndutu cheetah took off after a Thomson’s gazelle and ran straight in the direction of Crowley. The resulting image “Cheetah Chase,” won him first place in the action category of the 2018 Excellence in Craft photography contest and the President’s Choice Award. Outdoors Unlimited sat down with Crowley to talk about how he got the award-winning shot.

Q: What was happening before you took the photo?
A: The cheetah had four cubs with her, but they weren’t actually involved with the chase. They just sat and watched. The cubs ran with her up to a point until she actually started the full-blown chase. She must have made a sound or something and they all just stopped right next to each other and lined up like pieces of wood. Then, she took off on the chase for the gazelle.

Q: Did you shoot a lot of frames?
A: There were probably 20 or 25 frames in the series.

Q: What happened after the photo?
A: At the end of the chase, she did catch the gazelle. The cheetah and her cubs started feeding on it, but hyenas came up and chased the cheetahs off the gazelle. The hyenas actually picked it up and ran away with it. The hyenas probably weighed three times as much as her. She had to give up the carcass.

Q: When did you realize you got the shot?
A: As soon as the hyenas carried off the carcass, I looked at the photos on my camera and I had a feeling I got some pretty decent ones.
Why did you choose this particular photo?  
I probably have eight or 10 frames where they are running directly at me, but this is the only one that they were both completely airborne. In most of the other ones, there’s a foot on the ground or something slightly different, but in this one they are flat out flying.

What kind of camera did you use and what were your settings?  
That series was taken with a Canon EOS 5D Mark 3 and a 500mm f/4 lens with a 1.4 teleconverter on the lens. So 700mm overall was the focal length. I typically have it set in aperture priority mode. I believe it was set at f9. That’s my standard f-stop setting. It would have been ISO 1250 most likely so that I could get the shutter speed high. There was good light, but I had the ISO bumped up a bit higher than I normally do because that wasn’t the first cheetah chase I had photographed that trip. It’s so fast that you want to have a lot of shutter speed to even try to capture an image like that.

You dedicated the photo to your driver Marando Shauri, who died about a year after you captured this photo. Tell us more about him.  
I knew him for a week. If you know someone for a week from sunup to sundown in a vehicle, you get to know them pretty well. He was soft spoken and the nicest guy. He was just a real sweetheart and family man. He was known in that vicinity for his knowledge about cheetahs and lions. He always seemed to know where they were going to go and what they were going to do. He moved us into the best position to capture those pictures. He was sadly killed by an elephant when he was just walking home in the dark after a day out in the field.

What advice would you give someone who is shooting a chase or other action that moves quickly?  
Know your camera inside and out so that you’re not fumbling for settings. When the chase is coming right at you at 70 mph, you don’t have time to think or look at your settings. I was shooting off a monopod, which made it easier to move around in a vehicle. You’re much more mobile, but not as stable. It worked really well in Africa because a lot of the time you’re standing up in the open roof of the Land Rover, and there’s not a lot of room for a tripod. In fact, there’s no room for a tripod. A monopod is probably the best piece of external equipment that I brought.

— Jazzie Johnson is studying journalism and environmental studies at the University of Montana. She hopes to be an investigative journalist like her hero Ida B. Wells, but in the meantime is an OWAA intern.
All things outdoors in Arkansas

BY RANDY ZELLERS  
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

SITUATED ON THE BANKS of the Arkansas River, downtown Little Rock has everything you need to enjoy a night on the town without feeling cramped by big city.

The conference hotel, a Hilton DoubleTree, is connected to the recently revitalized Robinson Center Music Hall, and in the heart of downtown.

A trolley system allows visitors to easily explore nearby restaurants and shops.

But we know what’s really important: the outdoors. Little Rock offers a variety of incredible outdoor opportunities. You can explore bike and water trails.

The Arkansas River is home to hundreds of species of fish and wildlife. The Little Maumelle River, which flows into the Arkansas just upstream of the conference hotel, provides backwater habitat to keep an angler busy with largemouth bass, crappie and bream.

About an hour’s drive from the hotel you’ll find the world-famous Little Red River, which offers some of the finest trout fishing in the region. This tailwater fishery created by cold runoff from Greers Ferry Reservoir offers anglers a chance to catch rainbow, cutthroat, brown and brook trout — in the same outing.

At nearby Lake Ouachita, home to this year’s Forrest Wood Cup, you’ll find fantastic fishing, camping and boating opportunities. Camp on one of the lake’s islands and enjoy daytime fishing for largemouth bass, striped bass, walleye, crappie and bream.

We are already working on exciting pre- and post-conference trip ideas. Have you ever held a hummingbird in your hands? We’re working with a hummingbird banding station on a trip.

Want to take a trip to the world’s only publicly accessible diamond mine? That’s another gem of a trip we have in store.

Thanks to a partnership between the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Arkansas State Parks and Tourism and the Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau, we’re planning a conference where you can experience the best outdoor opportunities the Natural State has to offer.

Fishing for largemouth bass, spotted bass and catfish is popular on the Arkansas River, which flows right through the heart of Little Rock. Photo: Courtesy Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

— Randy Zellers is the assistant chief of communications for the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. When he is not baiting hooks for his two children or hearing how it can be done better from his loving wife, he enjoys brief escapes from reality in Arkansas’ outdoors.
JOHN BURNS

John Burns lives in Inverness, the capital of the Highlands of Scotland. He has walked and climbed the hills of Scotland whilst also making trips to the Alps, the Pyrenees and the Canadian Rockies for more than 40 years. An expert ice climber, he was a member of the Cairngorm Mountain Rescue Team, and enjoys visiting remote mountain bothies, which are open shelters in the Highland hills. Burns has written two books, “The Last Hillwalker” and “Bothy Tales,” both of which are bestsellers in the United Kingdom. Burns is also an actor, and tours with his one-man play about Everest mountaineer George Mallory.

PAUL NICOLAUS

Paul Nicolaus is a freelance writer specializing in science, nature and health who has written for dozens of publications. Based in Park Falls, Wisconsin, he lives in the “Ruffed Grouse Capital of the World” and the home of St. Croix Rods. He’s also fortunate enough to be located right next door to the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. When Nicolaus is not busy typing up his latest story, you might find him greeting Mother Nature by foot, bike, canoe, ski or snowshoe in Wisconsin’s beautiful Northwoods. To learn more, feel free to visit www.nicolauswriting.com.

TED GORSLINE

Ted Gorsline is a native of Stratford, Ontario, Canada but now lives in Hamburg, Germany. He was the outdoor columnist and part-time travel writer at the Toronto Sun for 11 years. He worked as a freelance writer for 11 years, writing for the Globe and Mail newspaper and other publications. His stories have appeared in Outdoor Life magazine, The American Hunter, and the old Sports Afield magazine. He worked as an animal handler for the NBC TV series “Mutual of Omaha’s Wild Kingdom” and later founded Kilombero North Safaris in Tanzania where he led more than 250 buffalo hunts and more than 60 lion hunts.

DAVE HALL

Dave Hall is an artist and writer living in Salt Lake City and Montana’s Madison Valley. His oil landscapes of the Greater Yellowstone country hang in Western galleries. His book “Moving Water: An Artist’s Reflections on Fly Fishing, Friendship and Family” will release in fall 2018. You can see more at MovingWater.org or BlaineCreek.com. Hall is a graduate of the University of New Hampshire and Yale University’s School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. He is an avid fly fisherman — fresh and salt.

ABIGAIL WISE

Abigail Wise is the online managing editor for Outside magazine. She also freelances for publications like Runner’s World and Condé Nast Traveler. She’s the founder of Sticks & Stones, a newsletter about the outdoors, women’s issues, and badass women doing outdoorsy things. With fellow OWAA member Kassondra Cloos, Wise co-founded the editathon series Adventures in Wikipedia in an effort to get more women of the outdoor industry into the digital encyclopedia. She speaks at events like SXSW, the CORE conference, and the New York Travel Festival. In her free time, Wise can be found in the mountains or desert with her two dogs.

EVAN SMITH

Evan Smith has been a photographer for the past 10 years, having worked both for ad agencies and as a freelance professional. Smith found his passion in commercial photography after originally working as a wedding and portrait photographer. Smith is a portrait and architecture photographer, but his true passion lies in food photography. His goal as a photographer is to create images that inspire people and maybe make their mouths water just a little bit. A husband and father, Smith currently lives in Saint Petersburg, Florida and travels often for work.
ASSOCIATION UPDATE

DONORS

April and May 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

Joe Poge
SCS Ltd.

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 http://owaa.org/ou/about-owaa-skills-subject-matter-sections/.


TOM J. CARPENTER, Pheasants Forever, 4835 Wellington Ln., Plymouth, MN 55442. (W) 651-209-4940, tcarpenter@pheasantsforever.org. Editor of all print and digital publishing programs for Pheasants Forever, the world’s leading upland conservation organization. Experienced outdoor writer, editor and communications professional with a deep and broad-based background in both print and digital media, content marketing, public relations and marketing strategy, messaging and branding. Has also worked on staff at several other outdoor organization publications, including The Hunting and Fishing Library and North American Outdoor Group, where he was editor-in-chief. Accomplished freelance writer, focusing on hunting, conservation, natural resources and fishing topics, with credits in a wide array of national and regional publications. Skills: BEOS; Subject Matter: ACDFGJKLOPRSU; Sections: M. Approved for Active membership; sponsored by Anthony Hauck.

DONALD CRANFILL JR., WildIndiana.com, 3719 Pleasant Lake Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46227. (H) 317-739-7108, don.cranfill.jr@gmail.com, http://wildindiana.com/. Field editor, WildIndiana Magazine. Past board member, Hoosier Outdoor Writers. Chairman of the board, Hoosier Outdoor Writers. (Angie) Skills: EOSVWX; Subject Matter: ACDFGJKLOPRSU; Sections: BCF. Approved for Active membership; sponsored by Brandon Butler.


PAUL NICOLAUS, 414 Sixth Ave. S., Park Falls, WI 54552. (W) 715-904-1119, nicolauswriting@gmail.com, https://www.nicolauswriting.com/. Freelance writer specializing in science and health whose work has appeared in dozens of magazines, newspapers, trade publications and other outlets. When he’s not hard at work, you’ll likely find him greeting Mother Nature by foot, bike, canoe, ski or snowshoe in Wisconsin’s beautiful Northwoods. Skills: O; Subject Matter: ACGLMNOQP; Sections: CMN. Approved for Active membership; sponsored by Shawn Perich.

EVAN SMITH, 771 72nd Ave. N., St. Petersburg, FL 33702. (H) 561-385-6448, evansmitheditor@gmail.com. Producer, Contender Productions, a production and post-production house in Tampa, Florida. Also a freelance photographer and...
Restoring our treasured landscapes

A MERICANS NATIONAL FORESTS and grasslands are an incredible resource that all Americans should know more about. Existing in 46 states and Puerto Rico, the 193 million acres of forests, prairies, mountains, deserts, coastlines and hardwood forests that make up our national forests and grasslands are the foundation of American’s outdoor heritage. These landscapes provide nearly 80 percent of America’s big game habitat, more than 400,000 miles of streams to fish and 158,000 miles of trails to explore. But their stories are often missing from the public discourse.

The National Forest Foundation is the congressionally chartered nonprofit partner of the U.S. Forest Service. It works to restore our national forests and grasslands and connect Americans to their myriad of values and benefits. Through a variety of granting programs, youth conservation initiatives, exciting and creative communication efforts and by promoting collaborative conservation, the National Forest Foundation works to advance these landscapes. Non-advocacy and politically neutral, the foundation offers a set of experts who can offer unbiased views on pressing issues facing our national forests and grasslands.

Our national forests are a treasure trove of stories that are both important and relevant and fun and engaging. From ever-increasing wildfires and ongoing conflicts over natural resources management to inspiring adventures and unique personalities, these landscapes offer writers a wealth of story lines and topics. In addition to the wide variety of stories our national forests provide, the National Forest Foundation’s work also captures relevant and timely story lines that outdoor readers would find heartening and enlightening.

Recent examples of the National Forest Foundation’s work include: bringing youth from inner-city Chicago for an eight-week-long work program restoring a little-known tallgrass prairie an hour from the Windy City; restoring trails on Colorado’s highly popular 14,000-foot-plus peaks; reintroducing beavers to high alpine watersheds; and working with celebrity outdoor athletes like Travis Rice, Conrad Anker and Jimmy Chin to highlight why national forests matter to them. The National Forest Foundation works with brands like Coca-Cola, REI and Polaris to improve our forests, and these public-private partnerships are themselves interesting stories about how American businesses are supporting our public lands. Learn more about our work and our recent campaign to plant 50 million trees on our national forests at www.nationalforests.org.

Contact Greg Peters, the organization’s communications director, for story ideas, quotes and other resources at gpeters@nationalforests.org or 406-830-3361.

THE NATIONAL FOREST FOUNDATION promotes the enhancement and public enjoyment of the 193-million-acre national forest system. By directly engaging Americans and leveraging private and public funding, the National Forest Foundation improves forest health and Americans’ outdoor experiences. The National Forest Foundation’s programs inform millions of Americans about the importance of these treasured landscapes. Each year it restores fish and wildlife habitat, plants trees in areas affected by fires, insects and disease, improves recreational opportunities and enables communities to steward their national forests and grasslands. Learn more at http://www.nationalforests.org. Supporter Resources: CO.

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/.


DECEASED MEMBERS

Pat McManus
Robert Lindholm

OWAA.ORG/OU | OUTDOORS UNLIMITED 27
NAME: Candice Gaukel Andrews
RESIDENCE: Sun Prairie, Wisconsin
OWAA MEMBER SINCE: 2013

AREA(S) OF OUTDOOR COMMUNICATION: First and foremost, I consider myself to be an environmental-issues and nature-travel writer. However, I am an avid amateur photographer as well. (See http://www.candiceandrews.com)

WHAT DREW YOU TO THE FIELD? From my earliest memories, I have felt that playing outside or being in a natural landscape was “home.”

WHAT ENTICED YOU TO JOIN OWAA? My first experience with OWAA was at the 2005 conference taking place just outside my hometown of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin. I heard about an “outdoor writers conference,” and it sounded like something I’d be interested in. I was so impressed by the speakers and vendors at that conference that I vowed to join the organization and devote myself to outdoor writing from then on out. I felt like I had found my “tribe.” It took me eight more years to be able to pay for my annual dues through my outdoor writing income, but once I had made it to that level, I joined OWAA and have been a member ever since.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE OUTDOOR ACTIVITY? Hiking, kayaking and photography all go well together. I like to move slowly through landscapes, and all three allow me to take the time to do that.

WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON? I am the principal blogger for Good Nature Travel, the official blog of World Wildlife Fund and Natural Habitat Adventures. I also write for the International Galapagos Tour Operators Association and various other environmental organizations. And another book may be in the works.

WHAT HAVE YOU GAINED FROM THE ORGANIZATION? Being a member of OWAA has acquainted me with the variety and vastness of the outdoor communication field. If you have a passion for nature and the outdoors, you have a place at OWAA—no matter your specific writing niche or mode of expression. Very few organizations are like that, and being able to interact with others who share your overall passion but work from a far different perspective and use other tools than you do is how you learn to be a better writer.