

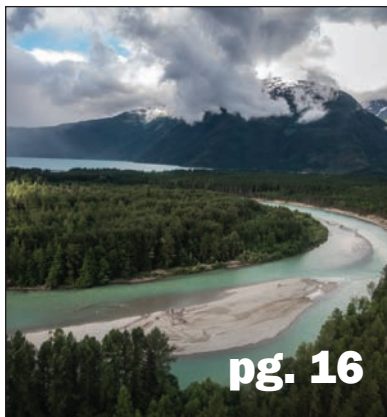
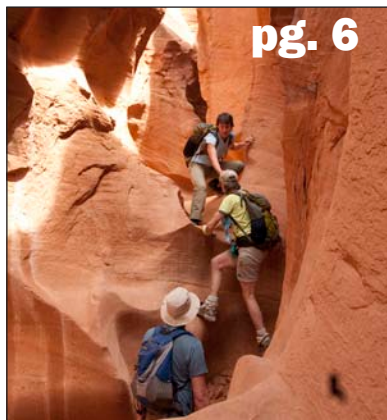
Outdoor Writers Association of America

OUTDOORS UNLIMITED

The Voice of the Outdoors

April/May 2015





OUTDOORS UNLIMITED

April/May 2015, Vol. 76 , No. 2

5 Restarting your career at 50 (or older) — by Tony Dolle

6 So you want to be a gear tester — by Dan Nelson

7 Radio isn't just radio anymore — by Ty Stockton

8 Switching sides — by Mark Taylor

9 Poop references build credibility — by Ken Keffer

10 Making money in radio — by Dan Small

11 The assembly line world of content marketing— by Tom Keer

29 In memorium: Jim Smith — by Colleen Miniuk-Sperry

4 From the executive director's desk

12 New members

14 Association update

19 Conference preview

24 Board candidate profiles

32 Bookshelf

ON THE COVER

By Steven Brutger

A summer storm moves in on a lake high in the Wind River Mountains in Wyoming. For more photos from Brutger's mountain adventures see pages 16-18.



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.

Copyright April/May 2015 by Outdoor Writers Association of America Inc. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. The contents of Outdoors Unlimited do not necessarily represent the opinion or endorsement of OWAA, its staff, officers, directors or members. Outdoors Unlimited (ISSN 0030-7181) is published bimonthly by Outdoor Writers Association of America Inc., 615 Oak St., Ste. 201, Missoula, MT 59801. Periodicals postage paid at Missoula, MT, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Outdoors Unlimited, Outdoor Writers Association of America Inc., 615 Oak St., Ste. 201, Missoula, MT 59801.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

615 Oak St., Ste. 201
Missoula, MT 59801
406-728-7434, Fax: 406-728-7445
info@owaa.org, www.owaa.org

STAFF

Executive Director: Tom Sadler
Membership and Conference Services
Director: Jessica Seitz
Publications Editor: Kelsey Dayton

PRESIDENT

Mark Freeman, Oregon

OFFICERS

Vice President: Lisa Ballard, Montana
Vice President: Brett Prettyman, Utah
Secretary: Paul Queneau, Montana
Treasurer: Ty Stockton, Wyoming

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Phil Bloom, Indiana
Sam Caldwell, Texas
Brent Frazee, Missouri
S. Chris Hunt, Idaho
Timothy Mead, North Carolina

Colleen Miniuk-Sperry, Arizona

Kris Millgate, Idaho

Peter Schroeder, Washington

Paul A. Smith, Wisconsin

COUNSELS

Attorney: William Jay Powell, Missouri

Medical: William W. Forgey, Indiana

Supporting Group Liaison: Katie McKalip, Montana

Writing the next chapter

Preparing for OWAA's 100th anniversary

Bill Monroe pulled his glasses out of his pocket, splayed a few papers on the hood of his pickup and signed his name to my Outdoor Writers Association of America membership application, muttering "It's about time you're one of us."

It was in December 1992, and Monroe was down from Portland, Oregon, to Medford, Oregon, to pick up a new boat and to get me into the organization at just the right time. At 28 years old and nearly four years of full-time newspaper outdoor writing behind me, it was time to spread my wings and '93 would be perfect because the annual conference that year was in Portland.

It was a memorable meeting of so many new colleagues at the opening night party and bumping into guys wearing camouflage sport coats and then saying, "Sorry. Didn't see you."

What I've described above could be OWAA's only documented first-hand account of what happened in Portland in 1993.

OWAA hasn't published a book on its history during my entire career in the association. We're due for an update.

I envision presenting an updated book documenting OWAA's history to our members and anyone else interested in outdoor communication, well in time for the organization's 100th anniversary in 2027.

But I'm not talking about knocking out a few new chapters on the ensuing decades since the last go-around in 1992. I see us

combining various media to tell OWAA's on-going story. Video clips, slide shows, radio broadcasts and, yes, even some written accounts of what has transpired in our organization are need to tell our story because it's not only our history — it's our present and our future.

As president, I have created an open ad-hoc committee soliciting ideas, stories, videos, photographs and written accounts of what happened in the past 23 years, as well a list of the members who want to take part in archiving our history in this new way.

Consider this an initial solicitation for your data, your memories and even your time to help figure out what should be in our updated history and what formats it should take.

Send what you have and know

to history@owaa.org so we can begin the stockpiling of these pieces of our past.

Since a small group of outdoor writers in the **Izaak Walton League** spawned our organization 88 years ago, OWAA has published only two histories.

The first, entitled "Fifty Years of OWAA" was written in 1977 by member Don Cullimore. The was followed up 15 years later by "Sixty-Five Years of OWAA" edited by Cullimore and long-time member and former OWAA Executive Director Ed Hanson. It took the 50-year anniversary book, added some missing pieces and filled out the most recent years.

Since then, OWAA essentially has lived

an undocumented existence.

The subject of documenting our past has come up off and on during my eight years as a board member and officer. Each time the idea came up as the organization approached what was considered a landmark age — oh, how we in the media adore anniversaries that end in 0 or 5. And each time we decided to put it off until the next anniversary with a 0 or a 5.

Kinda hard to ignore 100, however.

The issue most recently arose during a board meeting in McAllen, Texas, when member **Pat Wray** requested that the board reinstate the position of historian, eliminated as a cost-cutting measure a few years ago. While the board did not name a historian, it decided to create this ad-hoc committee to start collecting information for the history rewrite now, because as board member **Brent Frazee** said, 12 years can come awfully quickly.

This will also give OWAA's current and future boards an idea of who wants to work on this project and how it will look. The discussion also pointed toward having a future board and president appoint an official historian who would serve as chair of the committee and shepherd the project to fruition.

I just hope it will include one photograph of one of us wearing a camouflage sport coat at the Portland conference. ■

— OWAA President Mark Freeman,
mfreeman@mailtribune.com



MARK FREEMAN

Growing our way to financial health

In January, when the Board met for the annual midwinter board meeting, I presented a report on the financial and operational status of the organization. Like previous reports, it focused primarily on the financial and membership aspects of OWAA operations.

It is my pleasure to share that with you as well.

Even though 2014 saw some cash flow challenges, we are able to present a balanced budget for 2015. The key to our financial security continues to rest on the revenue side of our operations. We can't "cut" our way to financial security; we need to "grow" our way there. As you will see below, we are making good progress.

Membership is up 10 percent as of December 2014 compared to May 2014 and Supporting Group affiliations are up 18 percent

Since the last board meeting the team at headquarters has been busy on a number of fronts, and here are some highlights of our efforts.

While the presentations were excellent, the attendance at Conference in McAllen, Texas, was a disappointment. There was a big lesson learned: No more conferences close to holidays.

When the U.S. Forest Service initiated a rulemaking on filming and commercial photography in wilderness areas we responded with press statements, columns in Outdoors Unlimited and blog posts. President **Mark Freeman** and I had telephone conversations and meetings with Forest Service leadership. We submitted written comments viewable at <http://owaa.org/blog/2015/02/owaa-position-filming-photography-public-lands/> for the record.



TOM SADLER

OWAA's efforts were acknowledged in USFS Chief Tidwell's letter to the field clarifying the policy <http://owaa.org/file/20141104CommercialFilming&PhotographyPermits.pdf>.

In order to help increase awareness of OWAA we sponsored the Press Room at the **American Fly Fishing Trade Association's**

International Fly Tackle Dealer show which is co-located with the **American Sportfishing Association's** International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades show.

I joined the Southeastern Outdoor Press Association (SEOPA) and had the pleasure of attending their 50th anniversary conference. It was a great opportunity to visit with past and present OWAA notables. Board member **Tim Mead** very graciously made my "green ribbon" experience quite enjoyable. Thank you, Tim.

We added the **Ocean Conservancy** as a new EIC Fishing Category Co-Sponsor thanks to the good works of **Brandon Shuler**.

Working with the Strategic Planning committee we implemented a revised Strategic Plan (<http://owaa.org/about/strategic-plan/> See Strategic Plan 2014 Update 2).

Finally, as we move into 2015 we will be focusing on having a successful conference in Knoxville, Tennessee, and looking at ways to improve member and supporter communications.

As always, your comments and suggestions are most welcome. Call me directly at 406-552-4049 or email me. ■

— OWAA Executive Director Tom Sadler
tsadler@owaa.org

SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

ViewRanger, the GPS trail guide and mapping app for walking, cycling and other outdoor sports, makes it easy to find the best trails with its latest app update, ViewRanger 6.

With this major update for Apple and Android phones and tablets, ViewRanger has completely re-imagined the way that consumers can browse, search and discover great trails to explore. For trail guide authors and publishers, the new app offers improved ways to deliver information along the trail including text content, photos, and GPS-triggered audio.

ViewRanger already offers trail guide content from over 600 publishing, tourism and outdoor brands worldwide, including Menasha Ridge Press, Wilderness Press and Elevation Outdoors magazine. Now putting

trail content at the forefront of the app, enhanced exposure for publishers includes featured trail guide "Collections" and the personalized trail guide suggestions for consumers based on trail guide authors they favorite, as well as their previous activity within the app.

Publishing on ViewRanger via the my.viewranger.com website is free, as are the tools to promote digital trail guides, such as free embed-able maps for websites and blogs (web widgets) and QR codes. Advanced Internet deep links and app indexing also allows people browsing the internet to find and interact easily with content featured in the app. Furthermore, authors can either publish routes for free, or charge a small fee per download.

ViewRanger works with brands and

authors so that they can feel sure that their copyright is respected at all times, with their name or logo always prominent on all material, including when ViewRanger users share routes among themselves or on social media.

With already over one million route-views a month in the current app, the new visually-appealing and intuitive ViewRanger 6 will attract even more people searching for all sorts of trails in guidebook format for hiking, mountain biking or kayaking.

And it's not limited to off-road sports. ViewRanger also has plenty of City Guides in its repertoire, from nature trails to best beer guides. ■



Restarting your career at 50 (or older)

BY TONY DOLLE

Restarting your career is always challenging — and at least a little stressful — but this is especially true when at 50 you find yourself embarking on a new path.

Job loss heads the list of reasons, but there are many, many others factors to force you to restart your career. Sure, you were once the belle of the ball in your industry, but now you are just another job seeker. Only this time, you are at the twilight of your career, not the beginning or middle.

While writing this story, I did some research, asked a lot of questions and several themes kept cropping up. Here's what I found and I hope it helps you if you find yourself in the unenviable position of having to restart your career at age 50 or older.

What's in your wake?

Just about every story I read on this subject and every piece of information and advice I found recognizes we are in the midst of a workplace cultural revolution. If you are 50 or older and are looking for a job, the need to focus on “here's-how-I-made-a-difference” stories and the answer to “What business problem(s) do/have I solve(d)?” is mandatory. Yes, you read that right — mandatory.

Experts on this subject say focusing on the answers to those questions is far more important and carries much more weight on your resume than 20 or more years of devoted service to a blue chip employer.

Rather than list on your resume the several positions you held with one or two prominent employers, list how you solved problems for those employers and how your working there made a difference in the companies' successes.

Create a branding statement

I spoke with a couple of headhunters who told me they tell their clients to come up with branding statements that tell people “what you do on the job” and why you are different from other people who do the same thing. Here's an example: “Marketing communications, digital content, public & media relations that challenges the status quo.”

Here's another one: “I make little brands bigger via nimble, grassroots public relations” or how about this one: “As a call venture manager, I put my clients first, just behind employees.”

Tell your story

Since I found this suggestion online in a story without an author, I can't take credit for it, but its great advice.

“Fifty-plus professionals have years of experience and dozens of stories to relate, but a laundry list of job titles and employer names won't make anyone's heart beat faster. Look for the story arc in your own career and bring it home to employers and clients in a powerful résumé summary: ‘I dug for dinosaur bones in the backyard as a kid and followed that love of detection to become a library science

pro who still gets excited about digging up essential information.’ Litanies of jobs held are boring and powerless. Notice and articulate your storyline instead.”

Add your voice to your resume

One of the best things about researching this story is it forced me to re-think my own resume and begin revamping it. Out went the tired old boilerplate statements (“Results-orient professional”) and (“Decision-making, Know-how and P&L responsibility) and in their place went “stories” much like I would tell during a face-to-face interview.

Here's an example I found: “I began in accounting before realizing my problem-solving bent would come in handy in sales” is far more powerful than “seasoned sales manager with multi-industry experience.”

Get technical, digital and online

There are more than 250 online social and business networking outlets. LinkedIn was by far the first choice of nearly every expert I researched and those I spoke with when it comes to connecting online for business and job search purposes. If you aren't there, get there.

It takes about 30 minutes to fill out the profile (you'll need a photo, too). If you don't understand or think you aren't savvy enough to utilize this major league online networking success tool, read this book: “The Power Formula for LinkedIn Success. Kick-start Your Business, Brand and Job Search,” by Wayne Breitbarth. It will teach you everything you need to know to get started and be successful using LinkedIn.

Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and a host of others can help further your cause. But be aware that HR managers and hiring managers nearly always look at your Facebook page and your Twitter account to find out more about you. Take care in what you post and tweet. It could come back to haunt you. A post or tweet as simple as “I can't wait for this day to end” has resulted in more than one person being told to find work elsewhere.

Sharpen your look

OK, there's no good way to say this, so let's cut to the chase. You've been sedentary too long and it is starting to show. One too many desserts and lack of exercise have you frowning when you step on the scale. On top of that, everyone can stand a style update now and then.

If you are in a “visual rut” (I stole that phrase from a story I read online), do yourself a favor and get yourself a new haircut, try some new colors or better yet, hire a style consultant (in our family that's my 28-year-old daughter) to help ensure you present yourself as sharply as possible.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30

So you want to be a gear tester?

What it's really like when you're paid to play

BY DAN NELSON

Sitting inside a leaky tent, wrapped in a bag seemingly stuffed with turkey quills rather than goose down, I had an epiphany: Gear testing really is work.

It was the mid-1990s and I had a contract to review “budget gear” for Backpacker magazine. The criteria I developed required testing five to six products in each of the big four categories: Tents, packs, sleeping bags, and boots. And none could cost more than \$100 — I think boots had a \$50 limit. There were a few gems among the budget gear, but most proved unworthy of even the pittance being asked by the manufacturer. I spent a few months covering hundreds of trail miles, frequently in sheer agony. Sore feet on the trail from cheap boots. Aching shoulders from poorly designed packs. Cold, wet nights in camp thanks to shoddy tent and sleeping bag construction. But at the end of the season, I got my name on four sizeable story packages that shared some solid information. I received a decent-sized check, and I realized that as much as I loved being outside, sometimes being there was little more than a pain-in-the-ass job.

But not all gear testing involves misery. I've also been blessed with the opportunity to use and review innumerable products long before the public ever saw them. I've used prototypes that proved too expensive to bring to market, and influenced the final design of more than a few bestselling pieces of gear. All in all, my 22 years as a gear reviewer has been a blast.

My path to being a professional gear tester took a few side trails but generally I followed some well-established tracks to success as an outdoor journalist. I started working as an outdoor writer in 1990 freelancing outdoor columns to the Tacoma News Tribune. At the time, I worked full-time as a general news reporter for the paper's little sister, the Pierce County Herald.



Hikers make their way around a mountain in Iceland. The best gear testers are those that get outside a lot. Bad weather offers a great chance to really test gear. Photo courtesy **Dan Nelson**.

In 1992 I went to work for a non-profit, the Washington Trails Association, and helped create a new monthly magazine out of an old club newsletter. At the same time I convinced the editors of Backpacker to give me a shot at writing for them. At first I provided northwest hiking coverage, but when the editors there learned I was out on trails three to four days a week, they hired me to start testing gear. I soon started writing hiking guidebooks for Mountaineers Books, and that furthered my reputation as a professional backpacker and outdoor gear expert.

My first gear review ran in 1992, and from that day on, I worked to include gear coverage in most of my freelance editorial packages. I didn't do that with a goal of becoming a gear review specialist — I



Traversing a slot canyon in the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument is a great way to test durability of outdoor clothing and equipment. Photo courtesy **Dan Nelson**.

Radio isn't just radio anymore

BY TY STOCKTON

The first music video ever broadcast on MTV was “Video Killed the Radio Star” by The Buggles. It ushered in a new era for music that valued what we saw as much as what we heard.

Though there was no single prophetic event to herald a new age for terrestrial radio stations, times have certainly changed. Very few radio stations survive on the content they broadcast over the FM or AM airwaves. They augment their income with ads placed on Internet-based “stations” and app-driven broadcasts available to smartphone users. These forums allow for both audio and video content.

The staff of those traditional radio stations are expected to keep up with it all. They produce their daily talk shows or provide some local flair between songs, and they write blogs, post videos and add to the online content in their spare moments. Many of those people are desperate for help.

Unfortunately, the stations don't often have much — if any — money for freelance budgets. If you're lucky, you can find a sta-

tion that needs help and has some extra cash to share in exchange for regular, engaging content. Come up with an idea for a blog, provide some 30-second to one-minute videos, or illustrate your blog with photos, and you'll have a better chance at a long-term gig. You might be able to parlay that into voice-over work for ads for the products and services that relate to your blog, too.

If you can't score a paying deal with a radio station, you can still make it worthwhile if you approach this new market from an old-fashioned angle.

Radio stations may not have money to spare for content, but very few will turn down a partnership that brings them extra money. Some still barter for time on their on-air broadcasts. This is the process by which you produce a show (generally a talk show), find a few sponsors and give the show to the station to broadcast when they have time for it. You get the money from the sponsors (or pay some of the sponsorship money to the station for the time your show runs), and the station gets to sell ads before and after the program.

Bartering for time has largely become a thing of the past on the airwaves, but it's still alive and well on the Internet side of

radio. If you can produce a regular, engaging blog on say, archery, and convince your local archery shop to sponsor it for a few hundred bucks a month, you can take the idea to the local radio station and get them to host it for you. You and the sponsor will get more traffic than you'd likely get if you were hosting it on your own, because the station probably has a built-in audience that will see your posts. The station can also publicize your content and drive even more readers to you.

It's certainly not going to make you independently wealthy overnight, but if you're willing to put some work into it, you can make a little money, increase your exposure, experiment with new skills like video, audio and photography and have a little fun. ■



Ty Stockton produces a daily two-minute radio show for the Cowboy State News Network from his home in Cheyenne, Wyoming. He began his journalism career in print media, knowing he had a face for radio, but a voice for newspaper.

did it because it was a unique angle on a common story pitch. USA Today bought a feature on hiking Mount Rainier's Wonderland Trail in part because I included a sidebar on the latest generation of gear designed to make the 94-mile hike pleasant. When Outside agreed to a feature on the 15th anniversary of Mount St. Helen's eruption, my volcano-friendly gear recommendations sidebar was the final selling point. When the Seattle Times came calling about a regular column, they got a “Get in Gear” weekly feature that ran for 15 years.

Many of my gear-reviewing colleagues tell similar stories, and the path to professional gear reviewing seems to include a few well established steps.

- Pitch yourself and your work to any and all possible markets. Write reviews of the gear you've bought and include those in your pitches as examples of your work. Maybe start a personal gear blog so you can show an ongoing body of work.

- Don't expect big payoffs, especially early on, but don't be discouraged. Keep pitching, keep writing and make sure you are honestly able to bill yourself as an expert in your field.

- Be fair, honest and objective in all reviews. As a gear tester, you are working for the readers, not the gear makers. I've panned some \$1,000 ski jackets, and praised \$40 boots. If you suck up to gear makers to stay in their good graces, you'll turn off your readers

— and your editors.

- If you can't get out into the backcountry to thoroughly use a product, or if conditions don't provide for thorough testing, improvise. I've set up a bunch of tents in a field and blasted them with rain-bird sprinklers for 12-24 hours to simulate pounding rainstorms.

- Find a niche and become an expert. For me, that was hiking and backpacking. My time working with Washington Trails Association and as a hiking guidebook author established my gravitas as a professional hiker.

- Have fun. At the end of the day, if you don't enjoy what you are doing, that's going to be reflected in your work. ■



Dan Nelson is the editor of GearInstitute.com. He's always looking for gear experts with serious writing chops. If you are an expert in a product category that you think might work for his site, give him a shout at dan.nelson@gearinstitute.com

Switching sides

From covering stories to pitching them

BY MARK TAYLOR

In the good old days, landing a job as a full-time outdoors reporter at a big daily newspaper represented a career pinnacle for many outdoors writers. When you got the job, you stuck with it.

And why not?

It was a steady (and usually pretty decent) paycheck, in a good and noble industry, and we got to do plenty of what we loved: write about the outdoors.

These jobs were highly coveted. Relatively speaking there weren't many of them. And the men and women who had them tended to leave only under two circumstances. They either retired or died.

Bill Cochran did the former in 1998, retiring from The Roanoke Times after nearly 40 years at the paper. To my amazement, I got the job. It was everything I had hoped for, and more. I loved it. For me to leave you were going to have to pry the laptop from my cold, dead fingers.

Or so I thought.

As many of my friends and peers got caught up in layoffs that ravaged the newspaper industry, I held on. But doing so required adaptation, such as writing stories off the outdoors beat, working as a pinch-hitting photographer and even spending at least one night per week in the office managing our high school sports score-taking team.

Even though the job changed, it was still a pretty good job. That said, I was all ears last year when **Trout Unlimited's** communications honcho **Chris Hunt**, whom I'd gotten to know well while working together on OWAA's board, mentioned that he was going to be looking for a communications person in the East.

In May, not quite 16 years into my tenure at The Roanoke Times, I made the leap.

The past nine months have been fun and exciting. And also a little scary.

I had so much time in with the previous gig that I felt comfortably knowledgeable. In fact, I was probably too comfortable.

The new job brings something new and unknown daily. While that can be intimidating, learning is part of the fun.

Here are some of the key lessons I've picked up on so far:

■ If you are going to transition out of outdoor writing, either voluntarily or involuntarily, public relations is a natural fit because of the similarities between life on both sides of the news fence. The fact that both require good communications skills is an obvious one. Outdoors writers, generally speaking, are friendly press. While

covering controversies and tough stories is part of the gig, much of what outdoor writers produce is intended to encourage participation in outdoors activities. You know — stories about good places to hunt or fish, or about hot new trends or techniques. Simply put, outdoor writers already have experience promoting an agenda.

■ It's a lot easier to do public relations when you are passionate about your employer's mission. I wouldn't be having this much fun if I were doing PR for a local car dealership or hospital. Not that those businesses aren't important. But I'd much rather be out there fighting for trout and salmon and their watersheds. As a bonus, it's empowering and exciting to be surrounded by others who also are passionate about their jobs and mission, and not slinking around waiting for the Grim Reaper to appear.

■ Be judicious with your pitches. Coming from a reporter background is a huge advantage because you already have a good sense of the kinds of things that reporters are looking for. You must prioritize the pitches that are most important. That said, you will sometimes have to make pitches that you don't expect to be eagerly embraced. So...

■ Get used to hearing "no." Generally speaking, most folks I approached when I was a reporter were thrilled to talk. Reporters are slammed, and are getting hit from all directions. They can't jump on every pitch. Don't take the rejection personally. Just like working as a reporter, the key is to forge long-term connections.

■ You still get to write and shoot photos. The best part of my reporter gig was writing stories about interesting places, people and trends. I still get to do that. The reality of the current media atmosphere, with all of the new channels for information dissemination, is that public relations is no longer just about pitching stories. It's about producing content. We're not only working to get reporters to do stories on our employer's projects and initiatives, we're doing those stories, too.

■ You still get to write and shoot photos. Wait? Didn't I just say that? Yes. But in this case I'm talking about freelancing. Another reality of today's media world is that newspapers and magazines rely more than ever on non-staffers. If you can carve out the time, freelancing is a good way to visit the other side of the fence from time to time. ■



Mark Taylor is the eastern communications director for Trout Unlimited, covering a region that spans from Georgia to Maine to the upper Midwest. A past OWAA president, he lives in Roanoke, Virginia, and can be reached at mtaylor@tu.org.

Poop references build credibility

And other tips for writing for children

BY KEN KEFFER

People sometimes question how I can be a children's writer when I don't even have kids. It helps to know kids, and as a naturalist and environmental educator, I work with thousands of youth every year. Some would also argue I never grew up. Either way, I've used my degree in wildlife biology and excitement for the outdoors to connect with kids by writing (along with co-author Stacy Tornio) four books including a 2013 National Outdoor Book Award Honorable Mention winner. Here are my top tips for writing for children:

Know your audience: This is important to keep in mind no matter what audience you are targeting, but it is especially critical when writing for children. Content and style should always be age appropriate. While 18 and under might pass for youth in many situations, your audience will never be that broad with children's writing. A common breakdown when writing for kids is picture books, early childhood, middle reader and young adult. Each category requires special attention to word choice, style and structure. Also keep in mind that poop references can build credibility with any youth audience.

Don't talk down to children: This should go without saying, but it is so important that I'll say it anyway. Don't talk down to children. They aren't simply miniature versions of adults. They are thinking and learning while reading and it is your job as the writer to help facilitate this mental growth.

Simple is ok: One thing I've noticed is that many adults tend to forget that childhood is full of enthusiasm and a sense of wonder. I view it as my role to fully encourage this view of the outdoors. Everything is new and exciting. One of the early reviews for *The Kids' Outdoor Adventure Book* reinforced this for me. The reviewer was initially disappointed when reading over some of the simple activities we'd high-



Writing about the outdoors for kids opens a whole new market, but they are also a new audience and will need a different style of writing. Illustration by Rachel Riordan from "The Kids' Outdoor Adventure Book."

lighted, such as watching clouds float by, skipping rocks, making a snow angel and rolling down a hill like a log. But when the reviewer shared the book with her grandchildren they liked and wanted to do those activities. Also remember that simple is not the same as talking down to your audience.

Complex is also ok: Don't shy away from complex topics or using the correct terms — just be sure to define them in proper context. You don't have to present them as vocabulary words. Give an example to explain what you mean. When presenting to classes I'll often state the science terms, but then I will assure the students they won't have to remember the word until they get to college. It's much more important that they understand the concepts. I don't expect first graders to learn the term subnivean, but I do need them to understand that critters are scurrying around beneath the snow. It is the same when writing for youth audiences. Examples will help make complex topics more understandable.

Keep it fun: While some kids are active readers, not everyone shares this enthusiasm. Making reading fun can be especially critical for the younger audiences. While anthropomorphism can be used as a technique to make animals relatable, I avoid it in my nonfiction work. Facts can still be presented in a friendly and approachable way, and I will still use human examples as a comparison.

Illustrations can set the tone: The visual appeal can be critical with kids' books. I find describing illustration styles as complex as describing wines. We went with a "whimsical and yet sophisticated" style and insist on accurate illustrations for our work. The writing style coupled with the illustrations together set the tone. Visuals can make or break a children's project.

Make it interactive: Kids like to do things. There was a small debate on whether or not including a checklist of actions would feel like homework for kids in my first book. Action items aren't chores for kids. Instead they are accomplishments. Lots of writing presents a call to action. With children's writing this can be as simple as stepping outside to play or as encompassing as saving the world. Don't underestimate kids and they'll never leave you disappointed.

While it is rarely lucrative, I find writing about nature and the outdoors for youth audiences to be especially inspiring work. Contrary to some the widespread stereotype, it isn't any easier to write for kids than adults. Writing for children isn't that much different than writing for any other audience. The most important key is to know your audience. Every other tip goes back to this concept. ■



Ken Keffer writes kids' nature books from his home base in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Additionally, he is an active freelance writer for both youth and adult audiences and is a regular contributor to *Birds & Blooms* magazine. He was awarded the OWAA's 2014 Madson Fellowship.

Making money in radio

It is possible if you know how to sell

BY DAN SMALL

My good friend and mentor, the late Tony Dean, often said that his little three-minute radio show earned him more money than anything else he did. After a 20-year career in Public Television, I decided to try commercial radio myself.

My show is now in its 10th season, and while I can't yet make Tony's claim, I have found there are many ways to make money with a commercial radio show, and they all begin and end with selling.

A consummate salesman, Tony was the first to admit he learned to sell the hard way, one "No, thanks" at a time. I was lucky enough to make a sale to the first person I called when I decided to launch my show: A friend who owns a personal injury law firm and who loves to hunt. Dozens of calls later, I still had only one sponsor.

My success rate improved considerably after I sought the council of **Bobby Whitehead**, who taught me there are four steps to every sale. Bobby said they always happen in the same order and if you leave one out, you won't make the sale. Each step might take a few minutes or a few years, but each is critical to completing the transaction.

Step One: Establish rapport.

Your prospective sponsor must feel comfortable with you and your program. I'm actually pretty good at this step, maybe because I like schmoozing and I listen to people's stories. I think I made my first sale to my attorney friend because he and I hunted together and he was already a staunch supporter of my TV show. I lost him as a sponsor when he hired a new marketing director, which brings me to step No. 2.

Step Two: Determine need.

Your prospect must need what you are offering, or at least perceive that he or she needs it, or you'll lose the sale. My attorney friend told me he did not get any referrals from the outdoor market (transla-

tion: he didn't need what I had to sell). Maybe my listeners don't get into motorcycle accidents. (Or, maybe I don't have enough listeners?) At any rate, he now buys time on Milwaukee Brewers broadcasts. I hope he's happy, but I do intend to ask how that's working out for him. Sponsors' needs change, so don't hesitate to revisit a prospect every quarter or so, to see how his business is doing.

Step Three: Make your pitch.

Once you have determined that your sponsor might indeed need what you are offering, then and only then, should you make your pitch. Sponsor need should determine the duration, elements and cost of your proposed package.

I sold a commercial roofing company a three-month package back in 2008 because they were hiring when other businesses were laying people off. They got lots of calls from their ads and hired some good people. In fact, the ads worked so well they didn't need to run them anymore. They stayed with me, however, because we wrote new ads aimed at solving summer roof problems during a hot, dry season and winter roof problems during a heavy snow season. Then they hired a new marketing director, and now we're back to step No. 2 with them.

Step Four: Close.

Closing is simply asking for the sale and sealing the deal, but it's the hardest step in the process and where many people fail. I like to think that if you and I get along fine, if I understand what you need and if I make you a reasonable offer, you should automatically buy what I am selling. But more often than not it doesn't work out that way. Some prospects might hesitate at the price, or they might want other features than what you are offering. In those cases, you might need to back up to steps No. 2 and No. 3 and start again.

Tony Dean was a master at closing the deal. If his prospect agreed the offer was fair and he needed it, Tony immediately asked, "Well, can you sign this agreement

so we can get started?"

What can you sell? Your show length and frequency will dictate to a certain extent what you can sell. Tony Dean's three-minute show was typical of short-form programs. He sold two 30-second spots embedded within the show, but he could also sell spots adjacent to his show.

My show runs for 50 minutes on 11 broadcast stations and at least that many podcasts. Most of the broadcast stations I work with keep six minutes at the top of the hour for news, weather and maybe a couple of spot ads. They also have four minutes of spot ad time after the second break. The rest of the 50 minutes are mine to fill with content or ads. All ads also run in my podcasts, so my sponsors get online as well as broadcast listeners.

Obvious inventory items include the standard 30-second or one minute spot ad and the presenting sponsorship. If a sponsor doesn't have spots already produced, you can charge them to write or record them, or you might want to offer producing the spots at no charge as a "value added" service.

You may also be able to sell 10-second or 15-second spot ads, live reads (essentially ads or announcements that you read during the content portion of the show), promotional announcements, show segments, sponsored interviews, space on your e-newsletter or website, giveaways, live remote broadcasts and more. We sell the opportunity to sponsor a segment of our choosing for one price and an interview with a sponsor's spokesperson at a higher price.

If your broadcast station gives you promotional announcements (15 or 30-second spots that run at other times during the week to promote your show), you can sell those. Ask the station sales manager what he sells them for, then price yours accordingly. A typical 15-second promo might sound like this: "This week on Outdoors Radio, we'll hear about winter outdoor programs for women and talk to Bass Pro's Brent Chapman and Ott Defoe about the upcoming Bassmaster Classic. Brought to you by

The assembly line world of content marketing

BY TOM KEER

It goes a little something like this...

A bell goes off on Outlook notifying me that a new email arrived. I look quizzically at the address because I don't recognize the name but my spam filter didn't stop it, so there must be something to it. Fountain pens and high cotton stock are more in my wheelhouse, but I'm feeling lucky today. I decide to play a low-speed game of Russian roulette and open the email. Part of me is stunned that the entire operating system isn't wiped out in an instance.

"Wanna write for me?" says the email from Hunter Malamut, a person that seems beyond fictitious. Man? Woman? Child? I wasn't sure, but Hunter Malamut was an editor who wanted to buy several hundred of my pieces. Man, woman or child, Hunter Malamut was offering wire transfers of cash.

It turns out Hunter Malamut was with a content marketing provider. Content marketing providers are like warehouses for stock photography, but for words and they are becoming more prevalent.

I yawned. Several similar letters have hit my inbox in the past and they generally request a high volume and low pay sort of deal. The first one that came through was just after Y2K and my bank account would have netted out \$.000025 per word- plus images.

Hunter Malamut requested contract writing services for a chewing tobacco client. The work would appear on the company's website to a registered, 18-year and older crowd. The fees were \$.50 a word, and the content needed to be outdoors-oriented with a strong fishing and hunting bent. Images would be supplied by a professional photographer, so content was all that was needed. "Write as much — or as little — as you would like" said the note.

I signed on. Why not? I could write the pieces whenever I wanted and they just needed to be in sync with the publishing parameters. A brief tutorial familiarized me with the customized WordPress site. A second correspondence tied into an email prompt, alerted me to an assignment. The assignment paid \$120.00 for 300 words. It required a three-day turn around, some light SEO work and a rewrite or two. If I failed to hit all the outlined keywords, the mistakes could be corrected and audited, and resubmitted once revised.

She was my mechanical bride, so down the assembly line we

went. Sometimes the piece cleared the uprights and the points, my compensation, went on the score board. No checks appeared in my post office box. Instead, payments appeared during twice monthly cycles, deposited into a PayPal account.

I wrote and wrote and wrote some more. The pieces were quick and easy. I wrote them when I wanted and the process was simple. A few months passed, and one day I thought to check my PayPal account. Several payments cleared and boy was I in high cotton. My initial reaction was to wisely deposit the funds in a savings account, but then the voice of reason was gone in an instance. I snatched the money from the PayPal account, all of it, and took my wife out on the town. We had a big time.

After a pot of coffee the next morning there was another assignment. The group was looking for a saltwater fly-fishing piece. I proposed fish patterning on the flats. They accepted, I wrote and submitted, and there were a few tweaks and modifications. The client wanted more narrative and fewer facts, then a little more focus on keyword use and a rewrite in the meta description. No problem. Back and forth, back and forth, and so on and so forth.

A year later it was time for me to move on. The agency lost its client, and while there was an opportunity to write more words for other magazines I was tired. After a year of work I never met my editor. We never scripted stories together. There were no live conversations, we never laughed over mutually agreed upon points and never argued over theoretical rewrites. The process was formal, neutral and business like, with no feelings attached.

More content marketing providers launching every year and they will become a normal part of the communication industry. To my mind they are like ATM's instead of banks and they are the way of the future. Do I like 'em? I don't know yet, but I guarantee you this: it's a Brave New World. ■



Tom Keer is an award-winning writer who lives on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Keer writes regularly for over a dozen outdoor magazines and owns The Keer Group, a full-service, outdoor marketing company. Visit www.thekeergroup.com or at www.tomkeer.com.



Dan Small has been host and producer of Milwaukee Public Television's "Outdoor Wisconsin" since its premiere in November 1984. He also produces and hosts a weekly radio show, "Outdoors Radio with Dan Small," which airs on broadcast stations throughout Wisconsin and on numerous websites.

the Lake Home & Cabin Show, Jan. 23-25 at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison. Lakehomeandcabinshow.com."

You can sell naming rights to show segments: the "Rapala Fishing Report," "Coleman Cooking Corner," or "Toyota Tundra Destination of the Week," for instance.

We even sold our phone line for a year and a half to a sponsor who didn't want anything else. Every time we called a guest, we said, "Joining us on the (name of

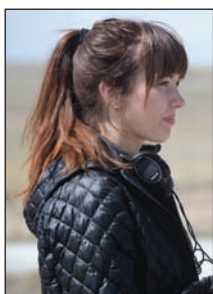
sponsor) Call of the Wild Hotline is charter captain Joe Guest." It might sound a little corny, but every time we made a call (three or four times per broadcast), our sponsor got mentioned.

You can probably think of more items to sell, but you won't sell them unless a sponsor trusts you, has a need you can meet at a reasonable price and of course — you are able to close the deal. ■

WELCOME TO OWAA



Erin Block lives in the mountains of Colorado and is a librarian and freelance writer. Her work has appeared in Flatirons Literary Review, Guernica, American Angler, Trout Magazine, Waterlog and Gray's Sporting Journal. She is a staff-writer for MidCurrent and editor-at-large for Trout Magazine. Block's debut book, "The View from Coal Creek" was published by Whitefish Press in 2013.



Gloria Dickie was born and raised in the snowbelt of Ontario, Canada. She is currently a master's student studying environmental journalism at the University of Colorado Boulder. She covers a wide variety of environmental and outdoor topics, but often focuses on human-wildlife conflict, as well as wildfire in the West. Dickie earned her bachelor's degree at the University of Western Ontario in media studies and geography. Her work has appeared in National Geographic News, High Country News and OnEarth. She also works for the Center for Environmental Journalism, located in Boulder. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, photography and painting. She was a 2014 recipient of the OWAA Bodie McDowell graduate scholarship.



Robin Follette was born and raised in Maine. Her writing career began at age 10. She learned to fish when old enough to hold a pole and learned to pick wild mushrooms and berries with her parents. Today, Follette lives in the middle of hundreds of thousands of acres of forest. She's an avid angler and still forages, and she's learned to hunt. In 2014 she filled her turkey, black bear and white-tailed deer tags. She also hunts upland game birds. Kayaking, camping and hiking are on the list of outdoors activities she enjoys. Follette is an outdoors skills educator. She is a Hooked On Fishing – Not On Drugs instructor and leads workshops in cooking wild game and campfire cooking for Becoming an Outdoors Woman in Maine. She writes a personal blog and as well as one for the Bangor Daily News, and she freelances for various publications.



Tony Humeston was born and raised in game-rich southern Iowa, an area renowned for upland game, waterfowl, and trophy deer. After serving a hitch in the U.S. Army, where he earned a berth on the Fourth Division Rifle Team, he graduated from Saint Ambrose University and the Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science. Upon retirement Humeston decided to pursue a career writing and photographing his passions: hunting and fishing. His articles have appeared in Iowa Game and Fish, The Iowa Sportsman, FurFishGame, MidWest Outdoors, Far West and the Iowa Historical Journal. He is the author of four books.



Johnathan Olivier is a devoted journalist and photographer from south Louisiana, as comfortable on an alligator hunt down the bayou as he is backpacking through the mountains. His work has appeared in publications such as Backpacker, Outside, Louisiana Sportsman magazine and Coastal Angler Magazine, as well as regular features in local newspapers across Louisiana. His passion for nature and outdoor recreation has taken him from the Rockies to the Appalachians and a few places in between. When he's not at home tracking down a story, you can catch him on a backpacking trail, soaking up a mountain sunset. Olivier's next adventure: a thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail, with pen, paper and camera in tow, of course.

WELCOME TO OWAA



Frank Saccente lives in Point Pleasant, New Jersey, and has spent the majority of his life on and around the waters of the Jersey Shore. He has been freelance writing since 1989. He spends the winters with his wife in the Florida Keys where they fish, kayak, windsurf and generally warm their bones. He has a master's degree in education from Montclair State University and spent 33 years educating the youth of America. His program has been featured on several PBS broadcasts. He has built several wooden boats, refurbished several others and has owned a marine cabinetmaking business. He is an avid boater, fisherman, windsurfer and traveler whose writing credits range from the Gannett Newspaper Group, Soundings, On The Water, Florida Keys Magazine, Gibbons-Humms Guide To The Florida Keys, American Windsurfer, New England Windsurfing Journal, Coast Magazine, Time Out Magazine and various professional journals.



Master Maine Guide, author, columnist and songwriter **Randy Spencer** operates his guiding and outfitting business in the Canadian border waters region of Downeast Maine. His first book, "Where Cool Waters Flow: Four Seasons with a Master Maine Guide" won the New England Outdoors 2010 Book of the Year Award. He was named one of the "Ten Most Intriguing People in Maine" by Portland Magazine, and Yankee Magazine included Spencer as one of the "25 people you need to meet most." His second book, "Wide and Deep: Tales and Recollections of a Master Maine Fishing Guide" was released April 1, 2014, from Skyhorse Publishing. Spencer has released five CDs of his own music. He has been the subject of features on CBS Sunday Morning, Boston Channel 5's Chronicle and ESPN2 as well as in The Wall Street Journal. When Spencer isn't guiding or writing, he's chasing Atlantic salmon on some of Canada's most storied rivers.



Charles A. Witek, III, caught his first fish when he was barely 2 years old, and has been an active saltwater angler ever since. By the time that he was graduated from the College of the Holy Cross in 1976, he had already sold his first articles to The Fisherman and was dedicating most of his free time to fishing, hunting and shooting. By then, the coastal striped bass stock was beginning to crash, and he found himself being drawn into the world of fisheries conservation. That experience kindled a lifelong interest in preserving and restoring fish stocks. He has held seats on the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, the New York Marine Resources Advisory Council and other advisory panels. He is an active freelance writer, concentrating on fresh and saltwater angling and, particularly, on conservation issues. Along with his freelance work, he writes a regular column for On the Water magazine, and publishes a blog, One Angler's Voyage, which focuses on marine fisheries issues.



Jay Zimmerman grew up in rural Ohio reading the hunting and fishing notes his father kept in a three-ring binder. Zimmerman worked as an archaeologist for the University of Toledo's anthropology department. He became an infantry paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division. After being honorably discharged from the U.S. Army, Zimmerman worked as a commercial halibut fisherman out of Kodiak Island, Alaska. He later worked as a moose-hunting guide out of Galena, Alaska, and as a bear hunting guide in Ontario, Canada. Zimmerman worked construction for a time, both as a carpenter and with concrete before he fled to Colorado and the fly-fishing industry. He has guided, taught casting and fly-tying classes, managed fly shops and is now a commercial fly-designer for Umpqua Feather Merchants. Zimmerman has written three books, "In Neck Deep: Stories from a Fisherman," "Top Ten Guide to Fly Fishing" and "The Best Carp Flies, How to Tie and Fish Them."

ASSOCIATION UPDATE

DONORS

January 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.

Bodie McDowell Scholarship Fund

Thomas M. Dillon

George Ingram

John Madson Fellowship Fund

David V. Buchanan

Martin H. Garrell

Paula J. Del Giudice

Chris Madson

Scott Stouder

Joel M. Vance

Operating Fund

David L. Barus

Sam Caldwell

William F. Hollister

Chris Madson

Philip Larson

Thayne Smith

Scott Stouder

Bill Thompson

Roy A. Welch Ph.D.

Restricted Endowment

David L. Barus

Tom Huggler

Bodie McDowell

Kevin Rhoades

H. Ted Upgren Jr.

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/>

Mr. Tristan Baurick, Kitsap Sun, 10421 Old Creosote Hill Rd., Bainbridge Island, WA 98110. (C) 206-856-7978, (W) 360-792-9212, tbaurick@gmail.com, www.tristanbaurick.com. Outdoors and environmental reporter, Kitsap Sun. Covers Olympic National Park, Olympic National Forest, Washington State Parks and local park systems in Kitsap County, as well as issues involving outdoor recreation in the central Puget Sound region. Skills: O; Sub-

ject Matter: GJLRS; Sections: Magazine, Newspaper. Approved for Active membership; sponsored by **Brett Prettyman**.

Steve Duda, 4021 36th Ave SW, Seattle, WA 98126. (H) 206-931-9481, trouts@gmail.com. Editor, The Flyfish Journal. Writing has appeared in every major fly-fishing magazine and has been featured in Rolling Stone, Huffington Post, Treehugger, Seattle Weekly and many others. Former editor-in-chief, Amazon.com and has held editorial positions at Boise Weekly and The Rocket. Skills: BEOW; Subject Matter: ABGLORT; Sections: Media Relations/Communications, Magazine. Approved for Active membership; sponsored by **S. Chris Hunt**.

Ms. Sydney Kahl, SMC#1318, 23 Romoda Dr. - St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY 13617. (H) 603-536-5133, (C) 603-254-6546, sakahl14@stlawu.edu. First year student at St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York. Published 14 articles as part of a column "Sydney's Travels" in her local newspaper, The Record Enterprise. Also published 28 articles on the Wandering Educators blog, www.wanderingeducators.com. Received a national journalism award to attend college, the Knudson Churchill journalism scholarship, for an essay on her story as a writer. Skills: C; Subject Matter: GLOS; Sections: Newspaper, Photography. Approved for Student membership.

Kimberly Ogonosky, Coastal Conservation Association Texas, 6919 Portwest Dr. Ste. 100, Houston, TX 77098. (C) 713-252-2503, (W) 713-626-4222, kogonosky@ccatexas.org, www.ccatexas.org. Director of communications, Coastal Conservation Association Texas, whose main job responsibilities include communicating news about Texas Gulf Coast conservation projects to the public. Columnist, bi-monthly magazine Currents. Films, edits, and distributes all of the videos about the association's habitat restoration projects (www.ccatexas.org/project-videos); photographs project sites; writes and distributes all press releases for the association to media outlets; posts news updates on the CCA Texas website (www.ccatexas.org).

ccatexas.org/news); directs the association's social presence; sends out mass eblasts to constituents; and creates and distributes flyers for various banquets and events. Skills: DOQSVW; Subject Matter: B; Sections: Media Relations/Communications, Magazine, Photography, TV/Video. Approved for Active membership; sponsored by **Sam Caldwell**.

Ryan Sabalow, Indianapolis Star, 130 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46225. (W) 317-444-6179, ryan.sabalow@indystar.com, <http://indystar.com>. Indianapolis Star investigative reporter covering natural resources and environmental issues. Skills: N; Subject Matter: R; Sections: Newspaper. Approved for Active membership; sponsored by **Phil Bloom**.

Frank Saccente, 1127 Morris Ave., Point Pleasant, NJ 08742. (H) 732-714-1903, csaccente1127@comcast.net. Freelance writer with credits including Gannett Newspaper Group, Soundings magazine, Florida Keys Magazine, Gibbons-Humms Guide: Florida Keys and Key West, Time Out Magazine, American Windsurfer, Wind Tracks, New England Windsurfing Journal, Coast magazine and various professional journals. (Cheryl) Skills: O; Subject Matter: BJKL; Sections: Newspaper. Approved for Associate membership; sponsored by **Tim Mead**.

Oliver White, Abaco and Bair's Lodge, 120 Tradescant Dr., Chapel Hill, NC 27517. (C) 307-200-1747, white.oliver@gmail.com, www.oliverwhitefishing.com. Like most fly -anglers, Oliver White cut his teeth on trout streams. An itch for adventure fueled trailblazing excursions to remote fishing opportunities the world over - Siberia, Tierra del Fuego, Venezuela, Africa and beyond. His passion for the water and adventure still burning, he left Wall Street, but with a well-honed skill set that would serve him well for the next phase of his career. He now saw the industry through the prism of business, opportunity and ambition. He took a moribund motel property and created Abaco Lodge, now a premier Bahamas fishing destination. He's deeply

ASSOCIATION UPDATE

involved in operations for Bair's Lodge, for years a South Andros Island mainstay for well-traveled anglers. And he continues to lead well-connected anglers on trips across the globe, widening his already estimable network. More than a lodge owner, White participates actively in the industry, endorsing brands, writing articles, participating in films and features and lending his name and efforts to conservation efforts. He supports all facets of fly-fishing - the traditions and the innovators, the products and people and, most most importantly, the places we love to spend our time. He has had articles and photography published in the Drake, Fly Fishing Saltwater and recently launched a column for Fly Fisherman called "Horizons." Skills: LOSW; Subject Matter: AB-CFLR; Sections: Magazine, Photography, TV/Video. Approved for Active membership; sponsored by **Tim Mead**.

REINSTATED MEMBERS

Joe Spoo DVM, (Active) 609 Perry Lane, Harrisburg, SD 57032. (H) 605-767-0020, (C) 605-360-2386, (W) 605-368-2088, jwspoo77@gmail.com, www.gundogdoc.com. Owns and manages a website devoted to gun dog health, training and owner education. Website features audio and video podcasts, articles, blog, "Ask the Vet" section, and a variety of dog health resources. Freelance writer and photographer for gun-dog related articles. (Chrissy) Skills: ILNOSW; Subject Matter: CENS.

CREDENTIAL REVIEWS

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

Bud Cole
Karuna Eberl
Ted Fauceglia
Tom Lounsbury

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

Aqua-Vu, c/o Traditions Media LLC, 1143 Honeysuckle Ln., Cambridge, MN 55008. Contact: Leslie Sundahl, (W) 612-839-4322, leslie@traditionsmedia.com, www.aquavu.com. Secondary contact: BJ Berglund, CFO, 218-646-0506, bjberglund@aquavu.com. For over a decade Aqua-Vu underwater video cameras have been the brand trusted by professional and recreational anglers alike. During this time period no other piece of consumer marine electronics has offered watersport enthusiasts more fun and entertainment. Supporter Resources: CDGIO.

Chevrolet, 387 Shuman Blvd., Naperville, IL 60563. Contact: Fred Ligouri, regional communications. (W) 312-405-0160, fred.ligouri@gm.com, <http://media.gm.com>. Founded in 1911 in Detroit, Chevrolet is now one of the world's largest car brands, doing business in more than 140 countries and selling more than 4.9 million cars and trucks a year. Chevrolet provides customers with fuel-efficient vehicles that feature spirited performance, expressive design, and high quality. More information on Chevrolet models can be found at <http://www.chevrolet.com>. Supporter Resources: P.

EyeBlack, 1488 F Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852. Contact: Peter Beveridge, CEO. (W) 301-816-1980, (Toll Free) 877-393-2522, (F) 301-816-7944, peterb@eyeblack.com, www.eyeblack.com. EyeBlack has created a new face concealment product. We use our sophisticated Athletic EyeBlack materials to create a super thin face decal that peels on and off your face; The Antler Pack and the Field Pack. We saw in the hunting market place that there was no alternative to the existing face paints to conceal your face, our research told us that the drawbacks were: it was messy, it would sweat off your face, it took a long time to put on and remove and it was often hard on your skin. Our proprietary materials enabled us to develop decals that eliminate all those issues, it actually breathes on your face, very comfortable to wear, easy to peel on and off and is so simple to use it gets you out to your hunt faster. Our product has been tested by hunters in the field and the results have been outstanding. Based in Rockville, Maryland, EyeBlack produces

innovative sports products that are used worldwide by athletes to enhance their on-field performance, while enabling fans to express their support of a team or a specific athlete. The company makes Athletic EyeBlack designed specifically for the player on the field to reduce the glare of the sun. EyeBlack is an official licensee of Major League Baseball, National Football Players Association, USA Football, Pop Warner Little Scholars and Major League Lacrosse. More than 400 collegiate programs across the nation wear custom EyeBlack products. Away from the athletic field, EyeBlack.com produces fan products to support their respective teams and collaborates with a number of nonprofits, corporations and others to create customized EyeBlack for their respective events, charitable causes, etc. Supporter Resources: P.

Fishouflage, c/o Traditions Media LLC, 1143 Honeysuckle Ln., Cambridge, MN 55008. Contact: Leslie Sundahl, (W) 612-839-4322, leslie@traditionsmedia.com, www.fishouflage.com. Secondary contact: Mark Kaiser, marketing director, 262-689-8868, mark@markkaisergroup.com. Passion for the outdoors has always had an exclusive look: camouflage. Until now, it's always been about the hunt. Not anymore. Finally, fishermen have a series of camo patterns exclusively for them — not for cover or to conceal, but simply to be enjoyed. Fishouflage patterns are designed using cutting-edge underwater photography, digital rendering and the latest in high definition imaging to achieve unsurpassed realism. Freshwater and saltwater aquatic habitats come to life, and the fish we love to catch are so vivid in the designs the patterns are patented. Fishouflage is available worldwide on merchandise including clothing, tackle bags, rods, reels and many other items in bass, walleye, crappie, redbfish, musky and european carp patterns. Fishouflage clothing is built with long lasting, high performing fabrics, engineered for comfort and freedom of movement, with great attention to all the details. We know you'll love all our Fishouflage apparel. Supporter Resources: CDGIO.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

Portfolio

By Steven Brutger



The incomparable Dean River in British Columbia.



"The last load." A hunter heads home with his kill.



Matt Copeland descends into Fremont Canyon in Wyoming.



There's nothing like a warm fire when outside in the snow.



(Clockwise from top) Enjoying the last rays of light in the uplands of Montana.

Weather moves fast in the high country and winter hangs on well into June.

Ducking out of the office for an evening archery hunt for elk.

The moment when it all comes together.



Making an early morning stalk for pronghorn in the Red Desert in Wyoming.



(Top left) High mountain lakes in the southern Wind River Mountains often reward those who are willing to make the effort to reach them. (Above) A standoff in the timber. (Left) One last cast on a mountain lake.

OWAA's annual conference: Knoxville, Tennessee, June 26-28, 2015

Biology, ecology and research

There's plenty of story ideas waiting in Knoxville

When you explore the outdoors of eastern Tennessee, you will experience adventures in more ways than one. While biking, hiking, paddling, fishing or just wandering, you will see the incredible diversity of views, topography and ecology. You may even stumble upon any one of a variety of ongoing research or environmental projects in the region, and with it, a story idea.

The Tennessee River, formed by the confluence of the Holston and French Broad rivers, is the largest tributary of the Ohio River and flows through the center of Knoxville. Canoes, kayaks and stand-up paddleboards are seen frequently on the river, but more is going on underneath the surface. Conservation Fisheries is a Knoxville non-profit dedicated to preserving the aquatic biodiversity in our streams and rivers. The organization is the first facility in the Southeast to restore rare fish populations that have been eliminated because of pollution or habitat destruction. It has also developed unique, non-invasive techniques to monitor rare fish in many southeastern states.

The University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine, one of only 28 accredited veterinary colleges in the country, recently opened the Equine Performance and Rehabilitation Center under the direction of an equine surgery specialist who is also board-certified in veterinary sports medicine and rehabilitation. The location of this



Students and at the University of Tennessee's Equine Performance and Rehabilitation Center examine a horse. The university offers a great resource for those looking for science and research story ideas.

facility in Knoxville is fitting, as Tennessee has the second highest equine population in the United States. The UT Veterinary College also serves as the primary care facility for many organizations including the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency, the National Eagle Foundation, and Appalachian Bear Rescue, and has one of the highest case-loads of avian and exotic animals. The University's One Health program is a major initiative to coordinate human, animal and environmental caretakers to improve overall health.

Tennessee is home to some of the most diverse forests and habitats (the state can claim more species of trees than all of Europe) so it is no wonder that research related to biodiversity is increasing. Unfortunately, along with the high biodiversity, Tennessee leads all other inland states with the number of threatened plant and animal species. In order to preserve this biodiversity for future

generations, we need to document the variety of those in existence is crucial. The University of Tennessee is also collaborating to record the biodiversity within Knoxville's Urban Wilderness with a focus on reforestation and regeneration of habitats.

Along with UT's research, Discover Life in America is a local non-profit organization behind the ABTI — All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory — a joint effort with the National Park Service to record every single species within Great Smoky Mountains National Park and beyond. The

first effort of its kind, ATBI has many global organizations following its example. DLIA brings in top researchers and presents public educational programs as well as conducting the research.

Other projects within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park include the reintroduction of elk after their 200-year absence. The elk project is now working to finalize an environmental management plan and create strategies for monitoring possible future impacts to the elk and the park resources. Probably better known is the Synchronous firefly, one of at least 19 species found in the park and are the only species in America that can synchronize their flashing light patterns. Visitors continue to flock to the park to see the unique display, and researchers continue to explore the science

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

OWAA's annual conference: Knoxville, Tennessee, June 26-28, 2015

Find your focus

New All Comers Division added to photo scavenger hunt

BY JIM LOW

I have been attending OWAA conferences since 1987, and I've seen a lot of valuable and entertaining sessions in that time. The one conference feature that never disappoints or fails to teach me something useful is the photo scavenger hunt contest.

For the first few years, the contest was a spectator sport for me. As a writer first and a photographer second, I was daunted by the very thought of pitting my photographic skills against those of legendary outdoor shooters like **Tom Ulrich**, **Mike Furtman** and **Tim Christie**. But I kept coming back to see how the contestants met the individual photo challenges and to enjoy the sometimes hilarious, always instructive, critiques. I also thrilled to see flashes of brilliance from talented amateurs and secondary photographers like me who won particular categories and occasionally even placed in the top three. I also noticed in those early years that even the top names sometimes had trouble creatively fulfilling each of the contest's five assignments.

When I finally took the plunge and entered, my entries came in for their share of good-natured (and thankfully anonymous) ribbing from judges during the critique. But I also got the reward of some positive feedback. Finally, one year I even placed in the top three – a career highlight for a writer who once nursed dreams of shooting for National Geographic. If, on my best and luckiest day, I could beat out some of the nation's best photo pros, maybe I could have been a contender after all.

The thrill of the chase is reason enough to take part in the photo scavenger hunt. The opportunity to get feedback on your work from skilled pros is another. And if you need more motivation, consider the possibility of cash or other prizes should you place among the judges' top picks.

This year there is an easier and less intimidating way to get in on the action. We are adding a new All Comers Division to encourage participation by those who either lack the confidence to compete against the pros, or simply don't want to invest the time needed to meet the requirements of the main event. Those who sign up for this division will be asked to complete one photo and one short video



The photo scavenger hunt offers a great chance to think creatively while practicing your shooting skills. A new division this year offers one more way to participate. Photo by **Tom Ulrich**.

that capture the essence of the Knoxville OWAA conference. The winner will receive a cash prize.

I am still undecided which division I'll enter, or if I'll enter both. It's tempting to go for the prestige of placing in the main event, but the more relaxed pace of the new contest has its own appeal. If you want to join the fun, watch for a note from headquarters about contest assignment topics and early registration online. This year's contest is going to be twice as much fun as previous ones and is sure to be a conference highlight. And take it from me, it's much more fun when you have skin in the game. ■



*Jim Low's career included work as a newspaper reporter, magazine editor and public information officer for the Missouri Department of Conservation. His freelance credits include *Outdoor Life*, *Sports Afield*, *Game & Fish Publications*, *Arkansas Wildlife*, *Rifle and Shotgun*, *Popular Lures*, *Birder's World*, *Australian Birding* and *The Daily Australian*. He is also a lifetime OWAA member.*

Story ideas

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

associated with the phenomenon.

For more information on any of these projects, please contact the respective representatives.

Legacy Parks Foundation: Carol Evans,

Executive Director, cevans@legacyarks.org

Conservation Fisheries, Inc.: Patrick Rakes, Co-Director, xenisma@gmail.com

UT College of Veterinary Medicine:
Sandra Harbison, sharbiso@utk.edu

UT Landscape Architecture: Gale Fulton,

gfulton@utk.edu

Discover Life in America: Todd Witcher, Executive Director, todd@dlia.org

Great Smoky Mountains National Park:
<http://www.nps.gov/grsm/index.htm>. ■

—Visit Knoxville

OWAA's annual conference: Knoxville, Tennessee, June 26-28, 2015

Moneymakers and news-creators

We've got a conference lineup you won't want to miss

This year's conference is jam-packed with sessions on craft improvement, the business of outdoor communication and panels on timely outdoor topics. We've even added some built-in exercise time for our OWAA runners. Here's some highlights of the schedule so far. For the full agenda and up-to-date information visit the conference website at owaa.org/2015conference/.



Start planning how you can cover the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. Photo courtesy Mike Peaco.

Friday, June 26

Newsmaker: Partnering for the greater sage grouse 10 – 11:30 a.m.

Why is the sage grouse so important and what is being done to protect the iconic landscape it calls home? An unlikely collection of stakeholders have been working together to conserve the birds' habitat across the West. At the same time the **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** faces a Sept. 30 deadline to decide whether the sage grouse should be added to the endangered species list.

Smart Technology and Apps for the Working Journalist 1:45 – 2:45 p.m.

Speaker: **Earl Nottingham**

The convergence of digital technologies has fostered numerous "smart" devices and apps that have become a two-edge sword for the outdoor communicator. While they can be extremely productive tools for the working journalist, their ease of use, quality and availability now open up a competitive era of "citizen" and "backpack" journalism.



The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decides in September if the sage grouse warrants listing under the Endangered Species Act. Photo courtesy **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**.

100th Anniversary of the National Parks 1:45 – 2:45 p.m.

Speakers: National Park Service, National Park Foundation

The centennial of the National Park System will be celebrated across the country throughout 2016. Hear from the National Park Service and its partners about the most exciting stories and events as you plan coverage of this historic milestone.

Water Demo Day 3 – 6 p.m.

Water demo day starts with fishing from 3 – 4:30 p.m. at Fishing at World's Fair Park. Step out the back door of the convention center to join our fishing and watersport manufacturers for product demos and new product displays. Test a rod for your next gear review or learn new techniques to share with your readers. From there head the Outdoor Knoxville Adventure Center to dip your toes in the water or paddle around in a kayak from our watercraft manufacturers on the Tennessee River. See the newest outdoor gear and learn about the latest trends for getting people out on the water. The watercrafts demo runs from 4:30 to 6 p.m. ■

OWAA's annual conference: Knoxville, Tennessee, June 26-28, 2015



Christine Peterson tries out products at Demo Day in McAllen, Texas. This year Demo Day and Shooting Day combine for a Breakout Day. Photo by Kelsey Dayton.

Saturday June 27

Roll n Run 6 a.m.

All attendees are invited to run Saturday morning with other fleet-footed conference attendees rather than run solo in a new city. This is a no-fuss out and back run that will start and finish in the hotel lobby. Run a 5k or a 10k depending on how you feel at 6 a.m.

Natural History Walk 7 – 8 a.m.

Host: **Rich Patterson**, Ijams Nature Center

Join professional naturalist and former OWAA president Rich Patterson as well as a local expert from Ijams Nature Center on a one-hour non-strenuous walk to observe and learn about local flora and fauna. Many plants found in Knoxville have fascinating histories. Spread by people because of their ornamental, food or medicinal value, certain weeds have also developed a strong following. They're also extremely adaptable. Expand your knowledge of plant life locally and abroad on this morning excursion.

Breakout Day 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

John Sevier Shooting Center

Co-sponsored by Nissan North America

Learn about and test the latest firearms and outdoor gear from OWAA supporters and local companies. Visit with outdoor destination representatives, take a test drive or brush up on breaking news from our outdoor organizations.

Newsmaker: Gulf of Mexico Restoration 2 – 3 p.m.

Five years ago America's largest ecological disaster unfolded in the Gulf of Mexico as BP's Macondo well spewed an estimated 4.9 million barrels of oil into one of the world's richest

fisheries. The Deepwater Horizon spill came just five years after Hurricane Katrina barreled through the Gulf, inundating coastal cities and towns, killing more than 1,800 and profoundly illustrating the impacts of coastal wetland loss, especially in the Mississippi River Delta. The ecological disaster of the oil spill and the fines BP and others have been forced to pay give federal, state and local officials the opportunity to repair the ecological disaster of coastal habitat loss across the Gulf. Our speakers will give an update of restoration progress, priorities for the conservation community and how long fines and penalties will be litigated.

Ethics and Expectations: Comps, Demos, FAMs 2 – 3 p.m.

Speakers: Kelsey Dayton, **Louis Dzierzak**, **Chris Hunt**

Whether working on a gear review, writing about your favorite outdoor destinations or covering a news story, the cost to do the research is always a factor. Who pays for what and how does that impact the article? Understand how norms and expectations can vary across outlets and markets when it comes to comped activities, demo gear or familiarization tours.

Ethics in Wildlife Photography 3:15 – 4:30 p.m.

Speakers: **Michael Furtman**, **Chris Madson**, **Paul Queneau**

There are numerous ways to capture wildlife photography, but when it comes to things like baiting animals to get the perfect shot, do the ends justify the means? And what responsibility do photographers and editors have to inform their viewers about how a shot was obtained or whether a subject was captive or wild?

Newsmaker: Climate Change – The science, the politics and the future 3:15 – 4:30 p.m.

Speakers: **Hal Herring**, Field & Stream; **Todd Tanner**, Conservation Hawks; Cameron Wake, University of New Hampshire; Senator Sheldon Whitehouse. ■



Saturday's sessions include a panel discussion about the ethics of wildlife photography. Photo by **Paul Queneau**.

OWAA's annual conference: Knoxville, Tennessee, June 26-28, 2015



Sundays sessions feature topics on public lands such as ATV use, as well talks to strengthen your business. Photo by **Paul Queneau**.

Sunday June 28

Access for journalists on federal public lands 8 – 9:30 a.m.

Speakers: Representatives USFWS, USFS, NPS, others TBD

OWAA maintains that journalists should not have to apply for permits from their government to do their jobs and has opposed efforts to require them. Balancing access with the need for stewardship of our public lands presents significant challenges for both journalists and the land managers. This panel, made up of representatives from the federal land management agencies, will explore the issues surrounding the requirement for permits for filming and photography on the federal public lands they manage and provide insights into ways to address these challenges.

The Cloud: Tools for Your Business 8:50 – 9:30 a.m.

Speaker: **Paul Queneau**

Cloud computing tools can make your life easier in any number of ways, but wading through the vast number of offerings and knowing how to evaluate similar options can be a job in and of itself. Learn not only the benefits of using the Cloud, but what other outdoor communicators are using and how to pick the right tools to meet your needs.

ATV Use on Public Lands 9:40 – 11:10 a.m.

Speakers: **Tim Brass, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers**; Bob Richards, Tennessee Greenways and Trails Coordinator; Duane Taylor, Specialty Vehicle Institute of America

Join us for a lively panel discussion of Off-Highway Vehicle use on public lands, one of the most contentious outdoor issues facing us today. Panelists will include an OHV industry representative, a land conservation advocate and a public lands manager. A wide-open Q&A session will follow short presentations by each panelist.

Pricing your freelance services 9:40 – 11:10 a.m.

Associations like OWAA are prohibited by antitrust laws from prescribing or recommending pricing for the services and products of their members. We are permitted to educate our members. Following an introduction by OWAA's Legal Counsel, panelists will provide information about how some successful freelancers handle pricing their work and factors to consider when pricing your own services such as experience, market trends, type of client and more.

Drones and the Outdoors 11:20 a.m. – Noon

From hunting to photography and video, drones could have a profound impact for outdoor enthusiasts and outdoor communicators, but is this emerging technology a useful tool or an invasion of privacy and a disruption to the outdoor experience? Join our team of panelists as they examine the pros and cons of this technology as it becomes increasingly available to the general public.

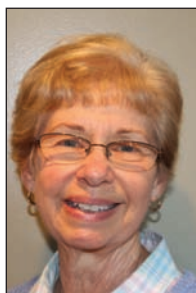
Sale of Public Lands 1:15 – 2:45 p.m.

"This land is your land, this land is my land"

Western legislators are driving attempts for states to place federal lands under state control. Some think a public land transfer is a good idea, while others fear it will result in land sales, loss of access and habitat degradation. ■

BOARD CANDIDATE PROFILES

Six OWAA members are running for three seats on OWAA's Board of Directors. All Active, Senior Active and Life members are encouraged to vote. This is the fourth year of online voting for OWAA's annual election. An email with a link to the online ballot was sent on April 1. A paper ballot will be sent via postal mail to those members that don't have an email address listed in OWAA's database. All ballots must be returned by May 1. Three elected candidates will begin serving three-year terms on June 28, 2015, at OWAA's board meeting. Results will be published in *Outdoors Unlimited* and on the OWAA website. Candidates are listed alphabetically. They were asked to submit a short biography and answers to the same five questions, which were drafted by OWAA's Board Nominating Committee.



**CELESTE
BAUMGARTNER**



TOM KEER



VICKI MOUNTZ



SHANE TOWNSEND



PAUL VANG



MIKE ZLOTNICKI

QUESTIONS:

1. What are your qualifications for a position on the Board of Directors? Have you served in a decision-making position before?
2. Why are you running for the Board and what do you hope to achieve if elected?
3. What do you think are the most important services OWAA offers to its members and how should we market those benefits to potential members?
4. The annual conference is OWAA's biggest outreach effort, yet many members rarely attend. How do we turn conference into a "can't miss" event and how do we ensure newer, younger members return after attending that first conference?
5. What is your vision for OWAA?

CELESTE BAUMGARTNER

Residence: Ohio

Years of OWAA membership: 22

Conferences attended: Six

Committees: Craft Improvement

Celeste Baumgartner lives on a small farm with her husband. They have four grown children. She has written for a *Farm World*, a weekly newspaper, for 26 years. She has also written articles about bicycling, birding, kayaking, fishing, astronomy, and travel. These were published in, besides *Farm World*, *Ohio Outdoor News*, the *Ohio Rural Electric Cooperative's Country Living* magazine, *Home & Away*, *Bird Watcher's Digest* and more.

1. What are your qualifications for a position on the Board of Directors? Have you served in a decision-making position before?

I have been a freelance writer for 30

years. I ran a small business for 25 years, and I am involved in the management of our farm. I served as president of the Outdoor Writers of Ohio for two years and was a member of that board for six years. I've also been a mom to four kids — that's decision making at the trickiest level.

2. Why are you running for the Board and what do you hope to achieve if elected?

I am running for the board because I have benefitted from and enjoyed being an OWAA member for 22 years, and I believe in paying it forward. If we all do our bit, the organization will flourish. As always, we need to find ways to attract new members of all ages and to make our organization vital to current members. I am in favor of finding incentives to encourage current members to bring in new members.

If we have a board with a mix of well-intentioned and intelligent people, we can

find creative ways of improving things. Our organization has always moved forward, maybe not always on the most straightforward path. We need to continue that and keep it as straightforward as possible.

3. What do you think are the most important services OWAA offers to its members and how should we market those benefits to potential members?

OWAA's networking opportunities are beneficial — I have had a book published and sold articles because of editors and other people I met at conferences. I have contacted members across the country, looking for information and sources.

Being in OWAA has encouraged me to learn about and keep up with technology.

The conferences and *Outdoors Unlimited* are great ways to market those benefits. When I read *Outdoors Unlimited* or attend a conference, I want to be challenged by quality articles and seminars. Keeping a good

web and social media presence is critical—if we're out there, people will see us.

4. The annual conference is OWAA's biggest outreach effort, yet many members rarely attend. How do we turn conference into a "can't miss" event and how do we ensure newer, younger members return after attending that first conference?

I have enjoyed and benefitted from the conferences I attended. At the first conference I attended, I was made to feel welcome—that meant a lot. Each conference needs a variety of craft improvement and other workshops as well as outdoor activities, offered at as reasonable rate as possible in the nicest location possible—that's a constant challenge. Each conference needs to be different according to the location and venue—therein lies the fun.

5. What is your vision for OWAA?

My vision for OWAA is to see it continuing as a vital, professional organization, walking that tightrope between being on the forefront of new technologies and methods without losing sight of our roots. I am proud of OWAA and hope to see the organization continue to move forward in as efficient a way as possible. ■

TOM KEER

Residence: Massachusetts

Years of OWAA membership: Six

Conferences attended: Three

Committees: 2015 Conference Planning

Tom Keer owns The Keer Group, a full-service outdoor marketing and communications company. He is also an award-winning, full-time freelance writer and columnist.

1. What are your qualifications for a position on the Board of Directors? Have you served in a decision-making position before?

I have previously served on the Board of Directors of Audubon International and am currently on the Board of Directors for Woodcock Limited. As a decision maker I am the president/CEO of The Keer Group, a marketing and communications company devoted to active outdoor companies, manufacturers and sporting venues. A past work experience that required decision making

abilities and is outdoors related was running the wholesale channel for the Orvis Company. I oversaw all businesses involved in International and domestic sales, service and marketing for brick-and-mortar and box store, and OEM) for the Orvis Company. My contributions earned me the company's top award, the Impact Award, in 2005 and that was for a \$3MM net profit swing from -\$2MM to +\$1MM.

2. Why are you running for the Board and what do you hope to achieve if elected?

The field of outdoor communication has changed dramatically in the past decade, and those changes cause retraction not just in outlets but in communicators. Visionary stewardship and proactive leadership is essential to clarify and define our roles as communicators. Our creative production is disproportionate with compensation and benefits. My objective is to help OWAA to strengthen its position as a voice for outdoor communicators and to be a leader in the communication arts industry.

3. What do you think are the most important services OWAA offers to its members and how should we market those benefits to potential members?

OWAA connects communicators across several genres and creates a community. It offers some group/bundled discount programs (health insurance, office supplies, product discounts). Efforts are made to connect communication artists with buyers (i.e. editors, producers) at the conference. Networking for sales conversion is important as are sections devoted to improving craft (which changes constantly). All of those should be bundled in different media to be consumed by members according to their time/resources/aptitudes.

4. The annual conference is OWAA's biggest outreach effort, yet many members rarely attend. How do we turn conference into a "can't miss" event and how do we ensure newer, younger members return after attending that first conference?

Time and expense are two significant reasons members do not attend conferences. So to increase attendance OWAA should create a value proposition that takes into account a members' needs and interests. Since the whole is the sum of the parts, here

are a few options.

1. Create one main conference that is of a national level.

2. Offer a series of regional satellite conferences that would be at a time of year and in an area which offers more flexibility in time and reduced travel costs. Underwriting local/regional presentations may be possible on a state/regional basis.

3. For newer and younger members, add:
-skill enhancement workshops
-a mentoring program matching veteran and rookie members

-review of financial services offered: fee and/or contract negotiation, assistance with accounting, tax preparation or legal advice, qualifying family health insurance plans, etc.

4. Create a virtual meeting which live streams marquee events: opening address, keynote addresses and messages, certain presentations. If the conference is worth attending then the virtual presentation will show new members that the conference is worth attending.

5. What is your vision for OWAA?

The number of markets for outdoor content has consolidated on the higher-payment side (print, television, radio, newspaper) and has been replaced by markets that pay a fraction of previous costs. Combined with a higher-cost of living index it is a challenge to be a full time outdoor communicator. Part of my objectives is to focus on OWAA being a driving factor in strengthening our position of communicators.

My second vision is to help OWAA set the standard for outdoor communication and for the organization to be recognized as a driving factor in the industry. I believe that there are branding initiatives that could be implemented that showcase OWAA members as industry-best. ■

VICKI MOUNTZ

Residence: Ohio

Years of OWAA membership: 31

Conferences attended: Six

Committees: Ethics, Membership Screening, EIC contests

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

OWAA elections

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

Vicki Mountz is a freelance writer/outdoor consultant living with husband Greg in Centerburg, Ohio. A 30-year member of OWAA, she has been a writer and seminar speaker, managing editor of two statewide and regional outdoor magazines, a fishing guide, past-president of Outdoor Writers of Ohio, executive editor of the state magazine Wild Ohio, and the information and education chief for the Ohio Division of Wildlife.

1. What are your qualifications for a position on the Board of Directors? Have you served in a decision-making position before?

Served two terms on the board of the Outdoor Writers of Ohio, one as VP and one as President. Currently on the board of a land conservancy. Spent 12 years as chief of information/education for the Ohio DNR's Division of Wildlife, and eight years prior to that as their communications manager. Prior to the wildlife agency, I was managing editor of two fishing magazines which contained annual hunting sections. I retired from DNR in 2013 and returned to freelancing. I've worked in many areas of communications and have a good understanding of the needs of OWAA's members, plus the experience necessary to contribute positively to the board.

2. Why are you running for the Board and what do you hope to achieve if elected?

Membership in OWAA has been truly beneficial to me over the years. I've watched the organization go through great times and tough times. Having retired from the state and having more time, I want to give back to a group that has been very helpful to me. My goals as a board member are to help OWAA evolve and flourish during a time of great change in the world of communications, help increase OWAA's value to members, and help grow the membership.

3. What do you think are the most important services OWAA offers to its members and how should we market those benefits to potential members?

The newsletter and the annual conference are OWAA's cornerstone services, along with the general benefit of networking with,

and learning from, established professionals. Craft improvement is a primary focus of hungry-for-work younger/newer communicators so our marketing efforts should pinpoint, "how will this conference make me grow as a communicator?" Younger people want to receive information electronically and immediately so additional resources should be put into expanding our electronic marketing efforts.

4. The annual conference is OWAA's biggest outreach effort, yet many members rarely attend. How do we turn conference into a "can't miss" event and how do we ensure newer, younger members return after attending that first conference?

People come to the conference to network, to learn from other writers or to find sources of future work. At my first conference, I was mentored by Dave and Kay Richey, who never ceased to be excellent sources of sound advice, and providers of sale's tools and new connections for me. Newer communicators want to know what skills are most important, where to get work, who's hiring. They appreciate social media and electronic resources. They may not have too much money, so keeping the conference short but powerful, and keeping the cost low, is very important. An economic incentive might help – like half price conference registration for first timers. Give them tools to help them succeed so they want to come back for more. Webinars of conference craft improvement sessions, free or at a low cost, might entice newcomers to give conference a try.

5. What is your vision for OWAA?

I want OWAA to be an organization that seeks new and innovative ways to communicate with readers, viewers, listeners, etc., about the amazing outdoors while integrating the techniques that have brought tremendous success to some members in the past. A great partnership can be formed by using proven, successful efforts while also integrating the newest, most innovative methods of communication. I see us developing a "best practices" or perhaps a "10-year study of trends in communications" that can benefit our entire membership. I love change but I don't want to ever lose the lessons learned by studying the history of what made our group successful in the past. ■

SHANE TOWNSEND

Residence: Texas

Years of OWAA membership: Four

Conferences attended: Three

Committees: Marketing committee

Shane Townsend, senior program advisor at The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University, is a strategist and writer who has worked in 20 countries on three continents. Since 2000, he has helped organizations identify and reach goals and communicate their successes to leverage resources. He has helped strengthen the efforts of organizations such as Virginia Department of Emergency Management, U.S. Peace Corps, USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Wheat Associates, Save the Children, The Corporation for National & Community Service and others. As an outdoor writer, Shane contributes to publications such as Gaff Magazine, Field & Stream, Native Peoples Magazine, USA Today Hunt & Fish magazine, Quail Forever Journal, Americas Magazine and others. His first book "Paddling Texas" was released in November 2014.

1. What are your qualifications for a position on the Board of Directors? Have you served in a decision-making position before?

As a professional outdoor communicator, I lead strategic communications efforts at a water conservation organization and am a freelance writer for several publications. My first book was recently released as well. For the past two years, I've served as Treasurer of the Texas Outdoor Writers Association. And, for much of my career I've worked as a consultant. In this capacity, I've helped many organizations identify opportunities, create strategic plans, and reach their goals.

My decision-making positions include deputy director for U.S. Wheat Associates 20-country South Asia region, director for the U.S. Wheat Associates Philippine country office, senior program advisor for strategic communications at The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, chief executive officer of The Red Paddle Group, contributing editor for GAFF Magazine, Treasurer of the Texas Outdoor Writers Association, radiological emergency response planner for the state of Virginia, director of external affairs at Campaign Consultation, and other positions in the response to

the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon, Hurricane Katrina, and other disaster deployments.

2. Why are you running for the Board and what do you hope to achieve if elected?

I see this as an opportunity to serve OWAA — an organization that not only gave me an opportunity and helped me get started, but that has continued to support me in many ways. I would hope to help OWAA envision its future and both plan and realize a path forward.

3. What do you think are the most important services OWAA offers to its members and how should we market those benefits to potential members?

The greatest benefit OWAA offers is the opportunity to build relationships with committed, capable, and successful professionals. These relationships yield friends, mentors, and collaborators. They yield business opportunities that would be hard to find elsewhere. (My first assignment came from an OWAA conference. And, I come home from each conference with new work.) How do we market this? No one in our field can be successful in a silo. We each need someone — an editor, a publisher or photographer, a writer or producer, someone. And, when it comes to the outdoors, OWAA is where the 6 degrees of separation shrinks. OWAA is where the outdoors comes together. Current and prospective members are looking for return on their investment of money and time. OWAA delivers that through relationships.

4. The annual conference is OWAA's biggest outreach effort, yet many members rarely attend. How do we turn conference into a "can't miss" event and how do we ensure newer, younger members return after attending that first conference?

Every attendee must leave each conference with something worthwhile and new (e.g. new work, new relationships, new skill, or new memories). If we deliver this, people will come back year after year. This is why I've not missed a conference since joining. The challenge is this: We must identify what people want from the conference, give it to them, capture the stories of how we gave it to them, and then share those stories with every member. This will

compel people to come and come again.

5. What is your vision for OWAA?

My vision for OWAA is that it continues its tradition as the place where professional outdoor communicators come together to connect, to learn, to celebrate, and to support one another, the outdoors, and subsequent generations of communicators. ■

PAUL VANG

Residence: Montana

Years of OWAA membership: 18

Conferences attended: 14

Committees: Finance, Craft Improvement.

Paul Vang is a native of Minnesota and after graduating from St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, he spent almost exactly one-third of the 20th Century in a career with the Social Security Administration, with over 21 of those years in supervision and management.

After retiring from government service he reinvented himself as a freelance writer, landing a gig writing a weekly outdoors newspaper column. He's expanded beyond that with credits with a lot of publications, though at age 75, he's happy to continue doing that weekly column. He's not making much money but he's working about as hard as he wants to work.

He became a member of OWAA in 1997, went to his first conference in 1999, and has been to 13 conferences since then. He's served on several OWAA committees, including finance and craft improvement.

1. What are your qualifications for a position on the Board of Directors? Have you served in a decision-making position before?

Over the years I've been active in a number of organizations, including churches, United Way, Kiwanis, etc. I've been president of many of those organizations, including our church, Kiwanis club, symphony board, Montana Association of Symphony Orchestras, and, for my fanciest title: District Governor of the Montana District of Kiwanis International. I'm also a member of the Northwest Outdoor Writers Association and served as president of NOWA in 2007. I'm currently serving on

the Board of the Butte Tennis Association and the Butte-Silver Bow Public Library Foundation.

2. Why are you running for the Board and what do you hope to achieve if elected?

Frankly, I'm a candidate because the nominating committee asked me. I'm not seeking office, but if my peers in OWAA desire, I'm willing to serve, even if you have to drag me, kicking and screaming.

3. What do you think are the most important services OWAA offers to its members and how should we market those benefits to potential members?

I think OWAA's most important service can be summed up as: helping outdoor communicators succeed in their career. We do this in numerous ways, such as annual conferences, Outdoors Unlimited, continuing education, mentoring, and giving people the opportunity to develop personal relationships with some of the best people in the business.

4. The annual conference is OWAA's biggest outreach effort, yet many members rarely attend. How do we turn conference into a "can't miss" event and how do we ensure newer, younger members return after attending that first conference?

As Yogi Berra said, "If the fans don't come out to the ball park, you can't stop them."

Still, it is too bad that some members rarely come to conferences. Certainly, attending our conferences costs time and money. Yet, the annual conference is where we, as outdoor communicators, really get a chance to improve our skills, meet our peers, meet newsmakers, and often land assignments. While we can't drag new communicators to our conferences, we can make sure they have a great experience that they want to repeat.

5. What is your vision for OWAA?

Organizations face a lot of challenges, and we're not unique in that respect. I know that community service organizations such as Kiwanis and Rotary have similar issues,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

Board candidates

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

such as membership recruitment and retention, conference and convention attendance, etc.

I believe we need to continually search out more new and more culturally diverse communicators out there and convincing them that OWAA is there to help them succeed. At the same time, we should make it clear that just joining an organization isn't enough; you have to participate and invest some time and money in the process. The organization's challenge, of course, is delivering on our promises, so that new members learn our ethics and values and to appreciate OWAA as much as I have and to become our future leaders. ■

MIKE ZLOTNICKI

Residence: North Carolina
Years of OWAA membership: 19
Conferences attended: Six
Committees: EIC Contests

Mike Zlotnicki is 50 years old. He lives in Garner, North Carolina, with his wife Renee and three daughter: Caroline, 15, Olivia 13 and Nicole, 11. He has a versatile German shorthaired pointer, Friedelsheim's Tar Heel Annie. He hunts and fishes whenever he has time. He works as associate editor at Wildlife in North Carolina magazine, which

placed first in the magazine category in the Association for Conservation Information in 2014.

1. What are your qualifications for a position on the Board of Directors? Have you served in a decision-making position before?

I have a BA in Journalism from the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill. Since 1994 I have worked as an editor in both newspaper and magazines. In 2003 my newspaper section won first place in the OWAA EIC. Overall, I've won 15 Excellence in Craft awards in my career in both Newspaper and Magazine divisions. I am a member of five local outdoors clubs in North Carolina and serve as an officer in several of those.

2. Why are you running for the Board and what do you hope to achieve if elected?

I'm running because I've been asked to run by a member I respect very much. I want a robust organization that caters to and supports both consumptive and non-consumptive members. I hunt and fish, but respect those who cover the nonconsumptive side and believe our biggest avenue for growth lies there – without forgetting the "old school" hook and bullet people who built this organization.

3. What do you think are the most

important services OWAA offers to its members and how should we market those benefits to potential members?

I think networking for the freelance set and craft improvement for everyone are paramount. This may not be popular, but I also think writer discounts on goods and services are attractive to potential members. As for marketing, we need to identify new and potential communicators, perhaps in college, and communicate directly to them. Smaller newspapers and niche publications, blogs and ezines are other venues to target.

4. The annual conference is OWAA's biggest outreach effort, yet many members rarely attend. How do we turn conference into a "can't miss" event and how do we ensure newer, younger members return after attending that first conference?

This may sound simplistic, but "big name" speakers and interactive events like Break Out Day need to be on the agenda, and video clips of such that can be sent to prospects would help market the conference.

5. What is your vision for OWAA?

My "vision" is a must-join organization for all outdoor communicators, both consumptive and nonconsumptive. Some birds are for watching, and some birds are for eating. We need to appeal to folks who cover both. ■

Association update

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

Florida Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 6870, Tallahassee, FL 32314. Contact: Diane Hines, vice president of administration. (W) 850-656-7113, (F) 850-942-4431, dhines@fwfonline.org, www.fwfonline.org. Secondary contact: Manley Fuller, president, wildfed@gmail.com. Florida Wildlife Federation is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated for the past 78 years to the conservation of Florida's fish, wildlife, water and plant life and to promotion of sustainable outdoor recreation for all citizens. Supporter Resources: C.

Humminbird, c/o Traditions Media LLC, 1143 Honeysuckle Ln., Cambridge, MN 55008. Contact: Leslie Sundahl, (W) 612-839-4322, leslie@traditionsmedia.com, www.humminbird.com. Secondary contact: Jeff Kolodzinski, brand manager, 770-888-6292, jkolodzinski@johnsonoutdoors.com. For over 30 years we've been America's favorite Fishfinder — the leading innovator of side imaging technology - providing recreational and professional anglers difference-making days out on the water, day after day, year after year. Supporter Resources: CDGIO. ■

Jan. 27, 1938 — Jan. 31, 2015

In memorium: Jim Smith

**BY COLLEEN
MINIUK-SPERRY**

In fall 2009, I received an email. A gentleman cordially outlined he had received my name from the Arizona Highways Photography Workshops and wondered if I would like to speak at his Grand Photography Club. After I enthusiastically agreed to do so, he offered to buy me lunch prior to my presentation.

Although I had never met him, the camera dangling around his neck made **Jim Smith** easy to pick out at the restaurant. Minutes into our introductory chatter, I learned we had more in common than just a love of nature photography. Jim grew up in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, just three towns east of where I spent half of my childhood. He had also, like me, changed careers to pursue his passion for the outdoors. Although he had started and ran his own real estate firm in Denver for 25 years, he left it behind to spend more time doing things he loved, like big game hunting, muskie fishing and target shooting. But he wanted to do more than simply participate; he aimed to share the joy of these activities with others through his writing and photography.

After our first meeting, I knew Jim not only dreamed big, but also pursued those ideas with gusto. As if authoring hundreds of outdoor articles for a variety of publications and winning many awards for his wildlife photography was not enough, he also served as the President for Muskie, Inc., was the editor emeritus of MUSKIE Magazine, a director for the **National Rifle Association**, and the Wildlife Commissioner for the Colorado Division of Wildlife. In 2013, the National Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame inducted him as a Legendary Communicator.

He also found time to teach hunter safety classes and organize fishing derbies for children. In addition, Jim served as President of the Grand Photography Club for a number of years, where he tirelessly (and seemingly



Long time OWAA member **Jim Smith** died Feb. 1. Courtesy photo.

effortlessly) helped me coordinate multiple photography seminars and workshops to benefit not only his club's members, but also other photographers from camera clubs across Phoenix. Jim loved the outdoors, photography, writing, learning, and people. He magically blended these pursuits together to create rich, supportive learning communities.

During one of our conversations, Jim asked if I had ever heard of the Outdoor Writers Association of America. Before I could answer, he rattled off a laundry list of people in the group to whom he wanted to introduce me. He also said he wanted me to present at the upcoming conference in Rochester, Minnesota.

"I think you should become a member," he said.

He handed me the membership application with his name already signed as my sponsor.

In summer 2010, I met all those talented communicators Jim mentioned (and many more) in Rochester. Prior to this event, I struggled to find my path as a photographer. What I learned during the conference inspired me to drop all my uninteresting commercial outlets to focus exclusively on the Great Outdoors. Jim had guided me to the mother ship and it changed my life.

My first year in the organization, Jim told me I'd get out of it, whatever I put into it. It was sound advice from someone who joined OWAA in 1992 and actively engaged with the organization. Jim chaired the Membership Recruitment Committee from 2007-2009 and participated in the Reference Manual Committee from 2005-2006,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30

Switching careers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Network in person

Attending local and regional networking events is mandatory. If there is a monthly meeting with a media group and you get invited, make sure you are there. Building your contacts at events is just as important. It will also help your reputation as a writer, photographer, public relations guru – you name it.

If you can find the time to attend an event each week, you'll increase your chances of landing a job much more quickly than if you stayed home.

In the public relations field where I've worked for many, many years, there is a Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) chapter in most metro areas. Contact a local public relations professional at any major company in your nearest metro area and chances are they are a PRSA member or know someone who is.

It's the same with photographers, writers, book authors, comput-

er wizards and other communications professionals. They all hold networking events regularly and are happy to have new members.

Those of us who are 50 and older have a wealth of work and life experience almost any business could use to its advantage. It's up to us to find ways to convince those businesses we are the asset they have been looking for to move them to the next level. The information above is just a beginning. Modify it to fit your situation. Restart your career and don't look back. ■



Tony Dolle is the executive vice president of Windward Communications, a marketing communications firm with clients in multiple industries, including the outdoors. He is also a past president in OWAA and a past president with the Tennessee Outdoor Writers Association, as well as a past president with the Association of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers.

Jim Smith

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

the Officer Nominating and Host Committee from 2008-2009, the Contest, Craft Improvement and Member Recruitment committees from 2009-2010 and the Craft Improvement Committee from 2010-2011. He also led the Photography Section for a short time and served on the Board of Directors from 2008-2010. In my five years as a member, I have tried to follow Jim's large footsteps.

Despite his declining health in recent years, Jim never passed up the chance to meet for lunch. While grabbing a bite in December 2014, he joked about his ailments.

"Well, I know I'm not going to live forever," he said. I took a moment to express to Jim how appreciative I was for all of his help and support over the years.

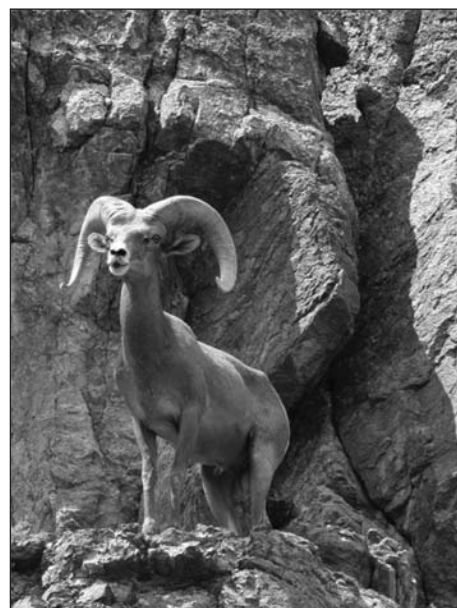
On Feb. 1, I received an email. Jim's wife of 19 years, Lynda, wanted to inform

me that just days after celebrating his 77th birthday, James "Jim" Todd Smith had passed away peacefully in his sleep. As Jim's best friend (and former OWAA member), Steve Budnik, summarized in a recent tribute for MUSKIE Magazine: "A life well lived, and lived to the fullest, to be sure."

In between the tears, I have found much joy in knowing that Jim's guidance, encouragement, and support has allowed me to achieve so much more than I could have ever imagined. Simply put, Jim gave me wings. Jim's legacy, spirit and impact on us will flourish forever. ■



Hailing from Chandler, Arizona, Colleen Miniuk-Sperry left her project management job in Corporate America in 2007 to pursue a career as a freelance outdoor photographer, writer, publisher, and speaker.



Jim Smith's photograph of a bighorn sheep won third place in the black-and-white fauna category of OWAA's 2009 Excellence in Craft Contests. Smith, who recently died, was an active photographer and long-time OWAA member. Photo by Jim Smith.



Jobs and editorial-needs listings are updated frequently.
Don't miss an opportunity; sign up for daily updates!

www.owaa.org/ou/category/market

Superior Printing of Heritage & Tradition



Why Not Let Us Make Your Next Book?

Whether you are putting thoughts and observations to paper, or capturing nature in all its glory through photography or painting, Seaber Turner Associates can provide the expertise to produce an original masterpiece that will be cherished by generations.

OWAA Member Benefit-Payment

Terms: 1/3 Net
30-60-90 days
from delivery of
finished product.

Seaber Turner Associates specializes in the manufacturing of books, magazines, calendars, and catalogs to look the way you envision without compromise. Our state-of-the-art book manufacturing facilities enable self-publishers, non profit organizations and corporations to cost-effectively purchase printing of as little as 250 copies or as many as desired.

We are **PROUD** to serve **OWAA** and **MEMBERS** as your printer.
Please call us at **610.944.6871** anytime to discuss your projects.



**SEABER TURNER
ASSOCIATES**
SUPERIOR BOOK PRINTING

610.944.6871
seabturner@aol.com
www.seaberturner.com



Copyright notice: Contributors grant rights for OWAA to publish once in Outdoors Unlimited, both the print and online versions, including archives, and on the OWAA website.

Outdoor Writers Association of America Inc.
615 Oak St., Ste. 201
Missoula, MT 59801
406-728-7434

April/May 2015



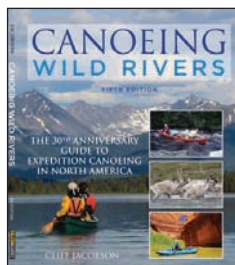
Looking for more? Go online to read past issues of OU. PDFs are available for printing, too.
Visit www.owaa.org/ou/category/departments/table-of-contents.

BOOKSHELF

Canoeing Wild Rivers, 30th Edition

By **Cliff Jacobson**; 352 pp; 200 color photographs; \$29.95.

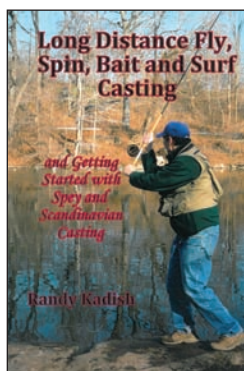
This is the fifth and final revision of Cliff Jacobson's flagship book, formerly titled "Expedition Canoeing." Long considered the premier text for wilderness canoeing and camping, this new full color edition has been heavily revised and expanded by more than 9,000 words. Though the focus remains on canoeing wild northern rivers, this new edition now includes chapters on desert and tropical canoeing. Canoes, equipment, maps and methods have been updated to reflect the latest trends.



Long distance Fly, Spin, Bait and Surf Casting

By **Randy Kadish**; Saw Mill River Press; E-book; 86 pp; \$2.99.

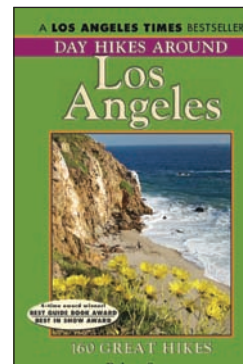
Randy Kadish never set out to write a book or even an article. Instead, he set out to become a better fly, surf, spin and spey caster. To do so, he studied casting techniques, immersing himself in articles, books and videos. But surprisingly he still couldn't cast more than 70-feet. He wanted a casting coach, but without one experimented on his own, taking notes that turned into magazine stories and eventually this book.



Day Hikes Around Los Angeles (6th Edition)

By **Robert Stone**; softcover; 544 pp.; 233 maps; \$18.95.

Despite the widespread presence of the Los Angeles metropolis, there exists thousands of acres of natural, undeveloped land and countless out-of-way hiking trails. Hikes range from boardwalk strolls along the ocean, to shady canyon trails that lead to far-reaching overlooks. Highlights include year-round waterfalls, wildlife preserves, lighthouses, Griffith Park (the country's largest municipal park), quiet canyon trails, panoramic vistas of the city and coastline, the rugged terrain of the San Gabriel Mountains and hikes along the entire length of the Santa Monica Mountains.



Day Hikes Around San Luis Obispo

By **Robert Stone**; softcover; 480 pp; 208 maps; \$21.95.

San Luis Obispo County is located where the white sand beaches of Central California merge with the dramatic Big Sur coastline. The unique geography and a year-round temperate climate creates an outstanding hiking environment. The trails take the hiker along the scalloped Pacific coastline to secluded coves and tide pools, to rocky promontories along the chain of volcanic morros, through wetland sanctuaries, across massive sand dunes, and up cool interior canyons. Highlights include waterfalls, bluffs, long stretches of beach, lighthouses, lakes, rivers and swimming holes.

