

The Blade



July – August 2009

The Official Publication of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers

2009 Awards-In-Craft winner "Saluda Slide", by HOW Member PJ Perea



Hoosier Outdoor Writers

The Hoosier Outdoor Writers was formed in 1969 and has brought together many diverse groups and individuals with shared interests. The Hoosier Outdoor Writers, known among its members as HOW, is a group of dedicated professionals who are keenly interested in the wise use of natural resources in the Hoosier State.

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Ben Shadley – 2011
Eric Stallsmith – 2011

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President's Message

by Bryan Poynter

"It is not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves." - - Sir Edmund Hillary

Summer will soon leave us behind and the routines of an impending fall will replace pool parties, family vacations and lazy days. However, this is our time! This is when the Hoosier Outdoor Writers are at their best. What are you doing to become the best communicator you can be? Where are you reaching outside of your comfort zones to publish, broadcast or photograph the most captivating outdoor experiences for our constituents?



I wanted to share a summary of a personal journey which took me way out of my comfort zone. On August 8th I stood atop Longs Peak in Rocky Mountain National Park. Longs is the highest peak in the eastern range and is one of Colorado's fifty-four 14'ers majestically standing 14,256 feet.

The climb was the culmination of a year of preparation, training, life changes and the return to good physical health. As with most things that are worthwhile, it was difficult and it was meaningful. There were many unintended consequences along the way. The people that I met, the personal growth moments, the overcoming of obstacles and the constant challenge of doing what I knew I needed to do and not wanting to do it but doing it anyway! It became a passion.

Why? Because it was worth it! I knew that the climb would be a challenge physically. Thus, I trained like an animal for a year, lost 80 lbs and am the strongest I have been since high school. I knew the climb would be a challenge mentally, too. I am petrified of heights. While this was a little harder to prepare for, I knew it would be up to me alone as to whether I went higher and higher.

The summit of Longs really became a metaphor for my life on so many levels. As my quote states above I was the one who grew immensely as a result. The mountain was just there as a tool for me to use.

As communicators, we tell stories. Sometimes our words and photographs share really strong emotions. Sometimes they just communicate facts. Regardless, we share. I hope that you share your passion. I hope that you are called to tell your stories. It doesn't really matter if they are fish stories, hunting pursuits, bird watching or backyard habitats. Make them your passions and communicate them to the best of your ability.

If you would like to read some of the postings to my blog over the past year, please do so at <http://toclimbamountain.blogspot.com/>

The Hoosier Outdoor Writers

New Members, Past Presidents & Memorial Section

Email Address Change:

Tom Berg has a new email address:
thomas.berg@comcast.net

Memorial to Deceased HOW Members

Those Who Have Gone Before Us

Jack Alkire – President of HOW 1979
Bill Beeman – Executive Director
Ed Blann
Charlie Brown
Jim “Moose” Carden – President 1982/83
Gary Carden
George Carey
John Case
Bill Church – President of HOW 1972
Jack “Big Jake” Cooper
Mark Cottingham
Jerry Criss
Dick Forbes
Dale Griffith
Fred Heckman
Jack Kerins
Mike Lyle – President of HOW 1981
Ralph “Cork” McHargue – President 1976
Bob Nesbit
Jack Parry
Harry Renfro
George Seketa
Al Spiers
Butch Tackett
Robert “Doc” Stunkard
Joe West

Presidents of HOW

Bill Scifres	1969
Bill Scifres	1970
Bill Scifres	1971
Bill Church	1972
Rick Bramwell	1973
Jack Ennis	1974
Phil Junker	1975
Ralph McHargue	1976
Tom Glancy	1977
Bob Rubin	1978
Jack Alkire	1979
Louie Stout	1980
Mike Lyle	1981
Jim “Moose” Carden	1982
Jim “Moose” Carden	1983
John Davis	1984
John Davis	1985
Ray Harper	1986
Ray Harper	1987
Ray Dickerson	1988
“Bayou” Bill Scifres	1989
“Bayou” Bill Scifres	1990
“Bayou” Bill Scifres	1991
Jack Spaulding	1992
Jack Spaulding	1993
John Rawlings	1994
Phil Bloom	1995
Martin (Marty) Jaranowski	1996
John Martino	1997
Mike Schoonveld	1998
Jack Spaulding	1999
Jack Spaulding	2000
Sharon Wiggins	2001
Phil Junker	2002
Larry Crecelius	2003
Bryan Poynter	2004
Phil Bloom	2005
Brian Smith	2006
Brian Smith	2007
Brent Wheat	2008
Bryan Poynter	2009

HOW History – Another Look Back

by Tom Berg

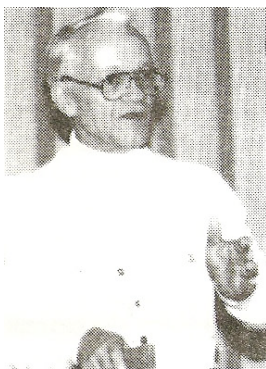
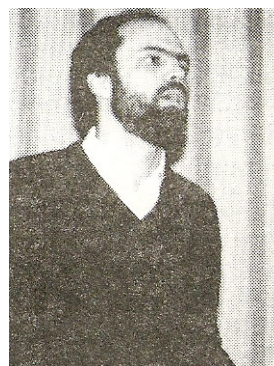
As mentioned in the May-June issue of *The Blade*, the Hoosier Outdoor Writers group has been around for a total of 40 years now. Well, almost 40 years. The first official HOW meeting was held in October of 1969, so we are almost there.

Looking back in time can be fun and interesting. Ever since long-time HOW member Phil Hawkins sent me his file of old letters, papers and correspondence from the early days of HOW, I have been eagerly reading through it. I recognize many of the names of our founding members, but not all of them. Thankfully, some of the original members are still with us.

In keeping with the idea of looking back in time, I have included a two-page letter in this issue that HOW's Bill Beeman wrote on October 22, 1969. The letter described the first meeting of the fledgling Hoosier Outdoor Writers group and listed all of the prospective members who were present. It also set the initial dues: \$5.00 for Active members!

Go ahead and read Bill's letter and see how many of the original names you recognize. How many of them did you personally know? How many of them were mentors or role models for you? One thing is for sure – many of them are/were legends in the field of outdoor communications.

I have also included a few 20-year old photos below of some recognizable HOW members for your viewing pleasure. Thanks again to member Phil Hawkins who provided all of HOW's historical papers for us to enjoy.



These photos are from the March, 1990 issue of *HOW News*. Can you identify them? The photo at the upper left shows Al Spiers and Bill Scifres. Dean Shadley is shown in the center (is that really him?), and Louie Stout is in the shot at the right. Bill Beeman is shown in the photo at the left.

Any members with old photos of HOW members from "The Early Days" are encouraged to send them to newsletter editor Tom Berg at thomas.berg@comcast.net or 2142 Nondorf St, Dyer, IN 46311.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
HOOSIER OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION
October 18-19-20, 1969
Templeton Cottage - Hymera, Indiana

The first organizational meeting of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers was held October 18-19-20, 1969, at the Templeton Cottage in Sullivan County, with 14 prospective members and 9 others, a total of 23, attending all or part of the three-day session.

The business meeting was held at 1 p.m., October 19 with Bill Scifres in charge, in lieu of Jack Parry's absence.

It was decided to incorporate H. O. W. after considerable discussion, by unanimous decision.

The next order of business was election of officers. Al Spiers made a motion seconded by George Tilford that Bill Scifres be nominated for President. Scifres made a motion that Jack Parry be nominated, but the motion died for lack of a second. It was unanimously moved that nominations be closed and Scifres elected by acclamation.

George Tilford made a motion, seconded by Al Spiers that Jack Parry be nominated for Vice President. Nominations were closed and Parry was elected Vice President by acclamation.

Bill Scifres made a motion, seconded by Al Spiers that Bill Beeman be nominated for Secretary-Treasurer. Nominations were closed and Beeman was elected by acclamation.

The Board of Directors will consist of two members from each of the four Indiana regions. The first Board to be elected at a later date, will consist of four Board members for one-year terms and four Board members for two-year terms. Thereafter, four Board members will be elected to two-year terms on each of the following years, beginning in 1971.

President Scifres asked for the number of invitations to this organizational meeting and it was reported that 43 invitations had been mailed with 23 acknowledging the invitations.

President Scifres named Al Spiers, Chairman of the Membership Committee and Mr. Spiers was asked to name the members of his committee to include representatives from each of the four regions. Ground rules for membership will be presented to President Scifres after the rules are written by the committee.

Three dollars of undetermined origin was presented to H. O. W. by Spiers and Beeman to activate its non-existent Treasury.

President Scifres appointed the Secretary-Treasurer as Chairman of the By-Laws Committee composed of President Scifres and Vice President Parry.

After some discussion, dues were set for the membership as follows: active member, \$5.00; associate member, \$10.00 and supporting member, \$25.00.

All Indiana manufacturers relating to the outdoors may qualify for a supporting membership. All Indiana-based representatives of out-of-state manufacturers of relating outdoors equipment shall qualify for a supporting

membership.


President Scifres asked that H. O. W. publish a monthly newsletter.

A lengthy discussion was held on some of the functions where H. O. W. can be effective, such as working more closely with the Department of Natural Resources and the State Legislature on proposed laws and regulations relating to the outdoors. President Scifres will later appoint a legislative committee from H. O. W. membership.

It is tentatively planned to hold the next meeting February 27-28, 1970, in conjunction with the Indianapolis Travel and Boat Show. George Tilford was named Chairman, to be assisted by President Scifres to work out plans for this meeting. It is tentatively planned to hold a press party February 27 and followed with a February 28 program possibly to include something about Monroe Reservoir by Natural Resources. The meeting will definitely be held to conform with the date of the Travel and Boat Show.

Gene Bass, director of the Division of Fish and Game, and Bill Donceel, director of the Division of Reservoir Management, attended the business meeting.

Prospective members attending all or part of the three-day outing included: Mack Gladding, George Tilford, Charles W. Moore, Dwight Gallimore, Bob Nesbit, Al Spiers, James J. Barry, Dick Forbes, S. B. Lutz, Jack Kerins, Jack Ennis, Bill Church, George Carey and Bill Beeman. Others interested in the organization in attendance were: Charles Medvick, Joe Spiller, Don Lynch, Ray Ridgley, Kenneth Horton, Tom Sater, George Skeel, Gene Bass and Bill Donceel.


WILLIAM A. BEEMAN
Secretary-Treasurer

October 22, 1969

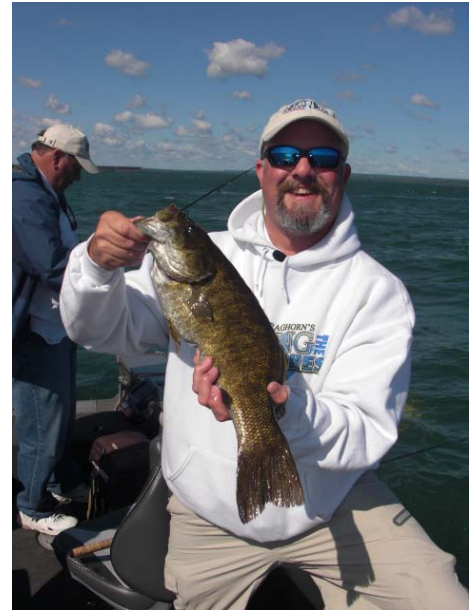
HOW Member News

Brian Smith Catches Dandy Smallmouth in Wisconsin

Brian Smith had a great day of smallmouth bass fishing in Ashland, Wisconsin recently while filming a new episode of his TV show, *Angling the Great Lakes*.

He was fishing Lake Superior's Chequamegon Bay when he latched onto this fine Great Lakes smallmouth. When a tape measure was stretched from head-to-tail, the fish officially measured 22" in length. Now that's a nice bass!

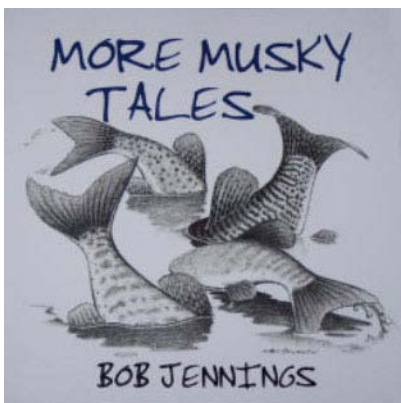
According to Brian, the *Angling the Great Lakes* website has been updated recently (www.ATGLTV.com). Make sure that you go to "On The Road" – that's where you will find new video entries from their latest production trips.



Another Musky Book From Author Bob Jennings

Book author Bob Jennings has recently published a new book titled *More Musky Tales*. He is offering HOW members a Limited Edition of 100 Paperback Books, signed and numbered. "This book is only in paperback form," said Jennings. "I will autograph copies as requested. The price is \$22.50 per book, which includes packing and Priority Mail with delivery confirmation."

"This book has my adventures in Musky Hunting with friends; real, fictional and immortal. The Lonesome Lodge adventures with all its' characters and visitors gives an account of some of the secrets that dwell within the walls. The Musky Hunts will prove humorous and enlightening in learning the ways of this enchanted lodge. The penalty for bringing a modern fishing rig to this lodge taxes the imagination. Musky fever strikes many of the visitors and sometimes haunts some of the resident Musky Hunters. Ken Bucklew's sketches bring these adventures to life."



Trade copies are available from the publisher, Infinity Publishing (infinitypublishing.com), at BuyBooksOnTheWeb.com.

For more information, contact Bob by email at: robert36969@peoplepc.com

Executive Director Berg Going To The Birds

HOW Executive Director Tom Berg has made two trips to downstate Patoka Lake so far this year, and fishing wasn't the only thing on his mind.

While it's true that Patoka is a great place to wet a line for a variety of fish species, it is also the home of an incredible number of different kinds of birds. The reservoir's proximity to the Hoosier National Forest certainly helps, but the real attraction for the birds is the abundance of excellent natural habitat.

The photo to the left shows an osprey sitting on its nest (look closely!) in a dead tree, high above the waters of the lake. Ospreys can be seen all around the lake at almost any time of day. The photo to the right shows one of the most numerous birds on the lake: a colorful tree swallow. These



small flycatchers make their nests among the dead trees that dot the coves and bays of Patoka Lake.

A few of the other birds that Berg saw on his recent Patoka excursion included bald eagles, wild turkeys, great blue herons, green herons, crows, blue jays, cardinals, goldfinches, red-winged blackbirds, mallard ducks, Canada geese, Eastern bluebirds, robins, starlings, cedar waxwings, red-headed woodpeckers, downy woodpeckers, red-tailed hawks, turkey vultures, mourning doves, hummingbirds, barn swallows, kingfishers, cormorants, chickadees, a tufted titmouse and various kinds of sparrows. So if you are interested in bird-watching, start planning a trip to Patoka soon!



Bayou Bill Scifres Still Recovering

Since the last mass email message that was sent out to the HOW membership about Bill Scifres, things have been changing regularly. On Monday, August 10th he was sent back to the hospital from Maple Park nursing home in Westfield and was put into intensive care. He had a temperature of 102 and his blood sugar level was over 500. They gave him antibiotics and brought down his temperature, but his blood sugar level was more problematic. He also had pneumonia and MRSA.

Fortunately, our friend Bill has taken a turn for the better. His wife Nancy has reported that he is now out of Clarion North Hospital and is back at the nursing home in Westfield. It appears that he is showing some improvement. His daughter, Patty, reports that he recognizes the immediate family and seems to understand what they are saying. Please continue to keep Bill and his family in your thoughts and prayers as he recovers.

HOW Member Jerry Criss Passes Away At Age 79

HOW member Jerry Criss from Lewis, IN died on June 30, 2009. Jerry was an Associate member of HOW for 20 years, and always enjoyed hearing news of the association. He was an avid fisherman, hunter and outdoorsman. He also spent time as a fishing guide, plying the waters of Raccoon Lake, Sullivan Lake and West Boggs Lake.

See page 17 for the full obituary listing.



McCune is Still Cooking (Or Is He Just Still Hungry?)

Everyone who knows HOW member Ray McCune is aware of his love of cooking. He occasionally samples what he is cooking, too!

He suggested that we print one of his favorite recipes in this issue for all of those people who are always wondering “what’s for dinner?” Good idea, Ray!

Ray's “MEAT LOAF SO SIMPLE ANYONE CAN MAKE IT”

- 1 envelope onion soup mix
 - 2 lbs. ground beef
 - 2 eggs (beaten)
 - 1/4 cup ketchup
 - 1/4 cup water
 - 3/4 cup dry bread crumbs
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Combine all ingredients; mix well. Shape mixture into a loaf and put into a loaf pan, bake on a flat surface, or in the bottom of a covered Dutch oven. Bake for 1 hour. This will probably serve 4. Great made into sandwiches.

NOTE: Use oat meal or cracker crumbs if you don't have bread crumbs.



Smith Brothers Tackle Florida Gators

Mark and Brian Smith made a recent trip to Marianna, Florida in a quest for their next adventure..... Alligators!

Mark took an 11' 5" gator and Brian took one that measured 10' 7". Both were very nice trophies and both were taken with Lightfield slugs.

According to Brian, "I can see where you could get hooked on this!"



HOW member Mike Schoonveld heard about their exploits, and wrote the following comment that hits a little closer to home for all of us: "You did hear that some local guys in Newton county got a 6-footer out of the Iroquois River near the Newton/Jasper County line a month or so ago, right?" Wow!

Don Bickel Corners Fish In Two States With Grandsons

Don Bickel has been doing some fishing with his grandsons recently, chasing fish in both Florida and Indiana. Here is his report:

Florida and grandsons: a combination that's hard to beat! Grandsons George and Dietrich Shireman have lived in St. Petersburg for about the past 5 years, having moved there with their parents. George is now 20 (our first grandchild) and Dietrich is 10. On the occasion of the seatrout photo (to the left), George and I fished with Bill AuCoin of St. Pete. Bill, as some of you know, is the source of The AuCoin Report. My initial contact with Bill was through HOW member Phil Junker, who had also fished with him.



Bill lives on the east side of St. Pete on a channel leading out into Tampa Bay. George, Bill and I fished an area of the Bay north of The Pier, a local landmark. Considering my Hoosier saltwater sense, I would describe the area as a sandbar paralleling the shoreline about ½ mile out. At low tide, the bar was somewhat exposed and we were fishing on the rising tide. The water was 5 to 6 feet deep and increasing with the tide.

We were using soft bodied plastics, D.O.A. lures on ¼ oz jig hooks, and MirroLure hard baits. Casting toward the sandbar and its break would bring a strike on about every other cast. Mixed in with the spotted seatrout were ladyfish - poor man's tarpon.

When we quit, primarily because of time constraints, there were 6 seatrout in the cooler. Their size ran from 18-22 inches. Several good fish were lost at the boat. It seems Bill had neglected to keep a landing net on-board and you don't reach down and lip these suckers. George and I will make a boat inspection prior to the next time out!

Back to Indiana: As spring 2009 ended, Grandson Gus Bickel, who lives in Crawfordsville just a mile or so from our house, fished with me on Lake Holiday south of town. Gus is 9 and is the youngest of our 5 grandkids. He is still working into the angler attitude.

On this day, we began shoreline fishing with crickets and slip-bobbers for bluegill or whatever had a taste for crickets. He and I agreed we would not keep any fish unless they were larger than 7 inches. It is amazing how many 6½ inch fish can be caught before that keeper shows up. My fishing partner was getting antsy.

My suggestion that we stow the bluegill rigs and try trolling for white bass and wipers with Shadraps was immediately agreed to. I also knew trolling with no strikes would be duller than catching 6 inch bluegill. However, as the photo above shows, luck was on our side. Gus got the first strike and 5 seconds later I had mine. We had a double! After a bit more than an hour of trolling, we had hooked up with 10 fish, some over 14 inches and some under 12. All in all, a good day!



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However, as the photo above shows, luck was on our side. Gus got the first strike and 5 seconds later I had mine. We had a double! After a bit more than an hour of trolling, we had hooked up with 10 fish, some over 14 inches and some under 12. All in all, a good day!

My fishing partner was getting antsy.

HOW Awards-In-Craft Winner

“Trapping Pete’s Farm”

by Brian Traylor

Pete’s Farm spread out across 400 acres of Ohio River bottomland at the foot of the Falls of the Ohio. The farm was part of an original 150,000 acre parcel granted to General George Rogers Clark and his militia after they captured control of the Northwest Territories from British forces. In 1803, along the riverbank to the southeast of the farm, Meriwether Lewis met up with General Clark’s brother, William Clark. Here, they began their famed expedition across the American West.

At one time, Pete and his brother Ernie made a living farming the river bottom. But as the years caught up with them, more and more of the farm was left alone. The cropland that surrounded the slow, muddy creeks and ditches of the farm grew into overgrown fields and woodlots.

Beavers built dams on the creeks, turning the low fields into wide, shallow marshes. Muskrats then built their reedy domed houses in the marshes and dug dens into the banks of the muddy creeks and ditches. Mink and raccoon prowled the farm. Even though the place was surrounded by urban development, red fox still hunted the fields.

I was connected to Pete’s farm by a long creek that ran past the end of the road where my parents lived. At the age of fourteen I began sneaking onto the farm to trap muskrats. For two miles, I would wade in leaky old chest waders, following the creek through neighborhoods, behind warehouses, and under rickety railroad bridges until I eventually made my way onto the farm.

Ernie had passed away years before, but the neighborhood boys still feared Pete. In fact, generations had passed down stories of how he handled trespassers. “If he catches you on the place, he’ll empty a twelve-gauge load of rock salt into your behind,” the older boys would warn the younger kids. “It’ll make you burn like you was

sitting on top of a stove.”

Their words of warning weren’t enough to keep me off the place, but I always kept a careful eye out for a man carrying a shotgun while I roamed the farm. Whenever I heard dogs baying off in the distance, I figured he was hot on my trail. Yet through three years of sneaking around setting traps, I never once saw Pete.

I’m not sure if my conscience finally got the best of me, or if I just got tired of being in a constant state of fear while trapping the farm, but I knew I couldn’t keep sneaking onto the place. The thought of not being able to wade through the marshes was too much to bear though, and I knew I had to ask Pete for permission to trap the place.

“No way is that old man going to let you trap his farm,” one of the neighbors told me. “He won’t let anyone set foot on the place.”

Nevertheless, opening day of trapping season found me at the old white farmhouse banging on the door. From inside I heard Pete rustling about. “Hold your horses! Give me some time!” His heavy voice sounded through the door.

Several minutes later the old door creaked open and Pete’s eighty-plus-year-old frame filled the doorway. He stood a head taller than my six feet and his shoulders stretched wide across.

“What do you want, boy?” Pete commanded as he stared down at me.

I thought about turning around right then and running back to the truck. But, somehow I mustered the courage to speak up. “Pete, I know you don’t know me,” I began. “But my Grandpa Stanley used to live up the road, and I think he helped you butcher hogs.” (continued)

Years before, when my dad had been just a boy, he had lived a couple of houses down the road from Pete's farm. He told me how his dad and Pete had been friends, but that was long ago. Grandpa Stanley had died in a farming accident when my dad was only fourteen years old.

Pete's cold eyes just stared through me. "Anyway," I stammered on, "I would be real grateful if you would allow me permission to trap your farm."

For a long, hard moment Pete continued to stare. "So you're Stanley's grandson," he finally spoke. "Every Sunday afternoon he came over here and pitched horseshoes. Once in awhile, he even let me win."

The old man's gaze softened, and he continued, "I suppose if you want to get down there in that grown-over mess of brambles and briars and set some traps that would be just fine with me."

My heart leaped in my chest. I could hardly believe what I was hearing. I had expected to be turned away with my tail between my legs.

"First things first, though," he added. "Some low-down varmint is killing my chickens. Two nights ago I lost thirteen hens, and my red rooster is a nervous wreck. I want you to put a stop to it."

I followed Pete out to the chicken yard, and after a thorough inspection I found a spot where I thought something might be getting in under the chicken wire. I placed a 220 conibear in front of the opening. Two mornings in a row the trap sat empty, but nothing bothered the chickens. On the third morning, Pete met me outside the farmhouse.

"Those chickens was making an awful ruckus last night," Pete said. "I suppose either something got them, or you got something."

I was so anxious I could barely stand walking up to the trap at Pete's ambling pace. But he said he wanted to see what I had caught, and I thought it would be rude of me to run ahead. When we finally got there, we were both amazed at the size of the possum that lay dead in the trap.

"Well," Pete amusedly said, "I ain't never heard of a chicken-killin' possum, but I ain't never seen a possum that big before, neither." For another week I left the trap out. Nothing else was caught, and no more chickens were killed. Pete then gave me permission to trap the whole place. But this time, he threw in these words:

"You see anyone else down there, you tell 'em to get out!" From that day on, instead of walking two miles each way, I drove my dad's old white 1971 GMC pickup truck right onto the farm.

Upon Pete's request, when I caught a mink I stopped at the farmhouse so he could see it. He told me about a little hidden drainage that ran out of one of the marshes where he thought I would be sure to catch another. I set a trap there and the next four mornings in a row, the trap held a raccoon. But on the fifth morning, the trap held a large buck mink. As soon as I finished checking the rest of my traps I ran straight to Pete's house.

"I used to love to trap mink," Pete said, running his old, time-hardened hands over the silky, still-wet fur. "There ain't no better bait in the world for a mink than a dead redbird. Them minks love to eat redbirds."

I'd never heard that before, but as I waded through the marshes, every so often I would find a bunch of red feathers spread out under a low-hanging bush. Something did like to make a meal of the cardinal.

Every so often, I would stop at the farmhouse to visit with Pete. He would tell me stories from his own times trapping and hunting on the farm.

"One cold winter back in the forty's, everything was froze solid," Pete began. "The Ohio River was a sheet of solid ice."

One morning, after a fresh fallen snow, my brother Ernie and me went out rabbit hunting. We hadn't seen a thing when we found an old culvert pipe laying in a ditch. A bunch of rabbit tracks went in, but none came out. I know this sounds like quite a story," he continued, "but it's the God honest truth. Ernie carried that old single-shot twelve gauge

leaning against the wall there and we only had six shells between us. Anyway, I picked up one end of that pipe and began lifting it a little at a time. One by one, the rabbits tumbled out and made a run of it. Well, ten rabbits came out of that old pipe and six of 'em went home with us.”

Every trapping season on Pete’s farm, I knew I was enjoying something special. Wading through a marsh filled with dried cattail stalks and marsh grass has a way of growing on a person. With each step, I would stir the decomposing vegetation of seasons past that lay hidden under the water. Tiny air bubbles would come oozing out to the surface, carrying a surprisingly pleasant, pungent smell to my nostrils. Each season brought a memory I will never forget.

One frosty fall morning, just as the sun was breaking the horizon, I waded out of a small feeder creek into the biggest marsh on the farm. As I looked out across the water, it appeared that every square inch was covered with some type of waterfall. A lone mallard hen spotted me and swam in a tight circle, not quite sure what to do. When she decided to take flight, she set every other bird into a panic, and the marsh came alive in one great big explosion of cackling birds, slapping water, and whistling wings.

I had never seen anything like it before, and I’m pretty sure I will never see anything like it again. Thousands of ducks and geese darkened the sky over my head. It was almost as if the sun had gone back down. Those birds still on the water frantically swam in circles, waiting for the first available air space so they, too, could take wing.

Ten minutes after the first mallard had lifted off ducks and geese were still flying overhead.

Every November I made my way back to the farm. Even though the skyline filled with skyscrapers from the city across the river, Pete chose to live in a different time. He made do without running water or electricity. In the wintertime, he heated the old farmhouse with wood and coal. With every visit to the farm, I felt as if I, too, was going back to a better time.



I was living in California years later when my mom called to tell me that Pete had died – I have not stepped foot on the farm again. Though there was nothing more between us than a few hunting and trapping stories, we had somehow connected through our experiences on the farm, and I felt the loss.

Another decade has passed since Pete’s death. The State of Indiana bought the farm and posted it off limits to trapping. Sometimes, in November, I will drive past the place. I still get the urge to sneak in again and go wading through the marshes. I know of a hidden little drainage where I would be certain to catch a mink. I don’t think the state would like that very much, though.

“Besides,” I tell myself, “maybe there’s a teenage kid from up the creek, going against his better judgment and sneaking onto the place, anyway.”

I hope there is. The game warden might not agree, but I guess there’s worse things a boy could do than wade through that marsh trapping a few muskrats.

This article won First Place in the Hunting/Trapping (More Than 1000 Words) Category

Entry information for Wrangler Rugged Wear Essay Contest



The contest information below comes from outdoor writer Bill AuCoin of AuCoin & Associates in St. Petersburg, Florida. Bill writes the AuCoin Report that many of us receive via email, and he asked that I forward this information to the HOW membership.

NAME: Wrangler Rugged Wear Adventures Essay Contest

ASSIGNMENT: Write an essay about your favorite outdoor adventure and how clothing played a role in its success.

WHO CAN ENTER: All outdoor writers and broadcasters who belong to an association of outdoor communicators in the U.S. or Canada.

LENGTH: From 150 to 200 typewritten words on one side of an 8.5 X 11 page.

HOW TO ENTER: Send your typewritten entry to Wrangler Rugged Wear Adventures, 5253 Dover St. NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33703. Attn: Bill AuCoin. (Note: each person may submit only one entry in any year.)

WINNERS: Wrangler Rugged Wear will periodically select and announce one winner each month. Entries not selected will remain eligible for the contest until the end of the year in which they were submitted. Wrangler Rugged Wear reserves the right not to select a winner on any given month and may discontinue the program at any time.

PRIZES: Each winner will be awarded a certificate for three pants or jeans and three shirts from Wrangler Rugged Wear.





THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE US



HOW Member Jerry Criss – Age 79
July 31, 1929 – June 30, 2009

Lewis, Indiana – Jerry L. Criss, 79, of Lewis, died at noon June 30, 2009 at his residence following a lengthy battle with cancer.

He was born July 31, 1929 to Charles and Ruby (Bickel) Criss. Jerry graduated from Hymera High School in 1947 and later attended Purdue University. While in school he was drafted into the United States Army and attended Leadership School. He was sent to Ft. Benning, Ga., Officer Candidate School where he graduated as second lieutenant on April 21, 1951 and served here in the U.S. for three years during the Korean War.

Jerry married Arlene L. Tobias on Nov. 19, 1967. He retired from Glas-Col Apparatus Company in 1994, after working for 30 years in the Traffic Department of several truck lines, the last being Lovelace Truck Service.

He was a 56-year member of Vigo Lodge No. 29 F&AM, Lewis, Ind., where he was Past Master and served as secretary for 40 years. He was a Past Patron of the O.E.S in Lewis. He was also an Honorary Member of more than 12 local Masonic Lodges. He was proud to be a Mason and worked hard to help support and maintain Vigo Lodge No. 29. He attended the Lewis United Methodist Church. Jerry served as treasurer of the Wren House-Lewis Community Center, which he helped establish, for more than 20 years. He was also President of the Stephens Memorial Cemetery Association for many years.

Jerry was an Associate member of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers for more than 20 years. He loved the outdoors and liked working around the house and gardening. He also dearly loved fishing and was rather well-known as a master crappie and bass fisherman in his younger years. He had several bass fishing trophies he earned while fishing in the old Fishathon Inc. in Terre Haute.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Charles and Ruby Criss; and son, Mark Criss.

Survivors include his wife, Arlene; and two daughters, Kathy Criss, and Laura L. Anderson and husband Darren, all of Terre Haute.

Visitation was at Schoppenhorst Funeral Home with Masonic Funeral Rites. Private graveside services were at Stephens Cemetery in Lewis with Pastor Rick Swan officiating. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Shriners Children's Hospital, St. Louis, Mo. c/o Zorah Shrine 420 N. Seventh St., Terre Haute, IN 47807; or Hospice of the Wabash Valley.

Supporting Member Websites

3M Scientific Anglers - www.scientificanglers.com
Alpen Optics - www.alpenoutdoor.com
ATK Ammunition – www.atk.com
B'n'M Pole Company - www.bnmpoles.com
Bass Pro Shops - www.basspro.com
Bill Lewis Lures – www.Rat-L-Trap.com
Birchwood Casey - www.birchwoodcasey.com
Blackpowder Products, Inc. - www.bpiguns.com
Buck Knives - www.buckknives.com
Bundy Ducks – www.bundyducks.com
Bushnell – www.bushnell.com
Cabela's, Inc. – www.cabelas.com
Camp Chef – www.campchef.com
Clam Corporation – www.clamcorp.com
Coleman Company - www.coleman.com
Creative Outdoor Products - www.hunterdan.com
Crimson Trace - www.crimsontrace.com
CTI Industries – www.ctiindustries.com
Danner Boots - www.danner.com
DeLorme, Inc. - www.delorme.com
Eagle Claw – www.eagleclaw.com
Edgecraft Corp – www.edgecraft.com
Environ-Metal, Inc. – www.hevishot.com
Flambeau – www.flambeauoutdoors.com
Flatrock Hunting Preserve - www.flatrockhunting.com
Flying Fisherman – www.flyingfisherman.com
Frabill – www.frabill.com
Freedom Group - www.freedom-group.com
G.Loomis - www.gloomis.com
Great American Tool Co. – www.greatamericantool.com
Hart Productions - www.hartproductions.com
Heatmax – www.heatmax.com
Hoosier Trapper Supply - www.hoosiertrappersupply.com
Horton Mfg Company - www.crossbow.com
HT Enterprises – www.icefish.com
Hunter's Specialties – www.hunterspec.com
Indiana Conservation Afield - www.icoo.com
Kwikee Kwiver Co. - www.kwikeekwiver.com
L&S Bait Co. – www.mirrorlure.com
LaCrosse Footwear - www.lacrossefootwear.com
Lamiglas – www.lamiglas.com
Leupold - www.leupold.com
Lightfield Ammunition – www.lightfieldslugs.com
Lodge Manufacturing – www.lodgemfg.com
Maptech - www.maptech.com
Mathews – www.mathews.com
Midway USA - www.midwayusa.com
Mossy Oak – www.mossyoak.com
Muzzy Products Corp. – www.muzzy.com
Off Shore Tackle Co. – www.offshoretackle.com
Optronics, Inc. – www.optronicsinc.com
Orange County - www.historicsouthernindiana.com
Otis Technology – www.otisgun.com
Outdoor Promotions - www.crappieusa.com
Plano Molding Company - www.planomolding.com
Poor Boy's/Lurecraft – www.lurecraft.com
Pradco Fishing – www.lurenet.com
Primos Hunting Calls – www.primos.com
Pure Fishing - www.purefishing.com
Quaker Boy, Inc. - www.quakerboygamecalls.com
Ranger Boat Company - www.rangerboats.com
Reef Runner Lures - www.reefrunner.com
Renfro Productions – www.renfroproductions.com
Rocky Brands – www.rockyboots.com
Sebile Lures – www.sebileusa.com
Shimano - www.shimano.com
Snosuit – www.snosuit.com
South Shore CVA - www.southshorecva.com
Star Brite – www.starbrite.com
Strikemaster Corporation – www.strikemaster.com
Taylor Brands – www.taylorbrandsllc.com
ThermaCELL – www.thermacell.com
Tri-Tronics, Inc. – www.tritronics.com
TTI-Blakemore Fishing – www.ttiblakemore.com
Vexilar – www.vexilar.com
Vortex Optics – www.vortexoptics.com
W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery – www.wrcase.com
WaveSpin Reels – www.wavespinreel.com
Wildlife Research Center – www.wildlife.com

HOW members are encouraged to contact our supporting members' websites for general information and answers to product and service questions.

HOW Supporting Member News

These pages are devoted to the loyal supporting members of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers. Brief descriptions of new products, award-winning products and press releases are listed here. HOW members interested in reading more can visit the supporting member websites or call or email the company contact for more information.

Plano's Liqua-Bait Locker System Wins Best of Show Award at 2009 ICAST Show

Plano Molding Company won the Tackle Management Best of Show Award at the ICAST Show last month. If you have ever had a bottle of simulated live bait spilled on the floor of your boat, or had one of the bags dry out, then you understand the value of the Liqua-Bait Locker System. The Liqua-Bait Locker System (LBL) has been developed by Plano to contain the liquids and the odors associated with simulated live baits as well and ensuring their freshness for continued use.



Manufactured out of Duraview™ the LBL systems will withstand the beating that anglers can put on their equipment. The Dri-Loc O-ring seal makes all components of the LBL system leak-proof and airtight, keeping your baits fresh and your tackle box and boat odor free. The

noncorrosive pinned hinges provide a strong solid hinge that will last through years of use. Designed utilizing the footprint of a 3700 StowAway® Utility box allowing these products to fit into any bags designed to carry three or more 3700 size utility boxes. For more information about the new Liqua-Bait Locker System, please contact Douglas Riewski at driewski@planomolding.com or check the website www.planomolding.com.

Strikemaster Power Augers Get New Upgrade

Continuing their brilliant tradition of marrying auger design with European ingenuity, StrikeMaster has tapped Solo®, Germany's premier small engine manufacturer. The partnership has clearly yielded the finest drilling machines on the planet. Since the 1940s, Solo has been a pioneer in small motor design, setting engineering standards for lawnmowers, chainsaws and backpack sprayers – real power tools for the toughest jobs in all outdoors.

“The choice to go Solo was an easy one,” asserts StrikeMaster's Randy Havel. “We've been pioneers in the ice fishing business for 63 years. Solo has been making premium small engines for 61. In designing the ultimate power augers, the partnership was a logical step.” For more information and a 2009-10 catalog, contact Kristy Markeson at kmarkeson@strikemaster.com.





Hoosier Trapper Supply Will Host Fall Rendezvous

One of HOW's newest Supporting Members, Hoosier Trapper Supply, is hosting the Fur Takers of America Chapter 7B Fall Rendezvous on September 26, 2009. It will be held at their facility at 1155 North Mathews Road, Greenwood, IN.

This rendezvous has been described as the largest single-day trappers rendezvous in the country, and it is normally attended by 500-600 people. Admission is free and everyone is welcome.

There will be trapping demonstrations all day, kid's games, a hog roast and more. This will be the 5th year for this great get-together, so stop in and join the fun.

Hoosier Trapper Supply is located on the south side of Indianapolis in Greenwood. For more information, please contact Charlie Masheck at 317-881-3075. You can also contact them via email at info@hoosiertrappersupply.com

HOOSIER TRAPPER SUPPLY INC.

Sebile Wins Two Awards At ICAST Show for New Lures

The premium lure maker Sebile won top honors in two categories at the ICAST Show in Orlando, FL last month. In the Soft Lure division, their new Magic Swimmer Soft Pro lure was the big winner. This lure is a swimbait with an adjustable weighting system that allows the swimming action of the lure to be changed. They also beat out the competition in the Hard Lure division with their Spin Shad lure. The Spin Shad is a lipless crankbait and spinner combined in one bait.



Both lures were a big hit with the ICAST judges and show attendees alike.

For more information on Sebile lures, contact Keeton Eoff at (325) 437-8103 or via email at keoff@sebile.com. You may also visit their website at www.sebileUSA.com.

Hoosier Outdoor Writers

Application For New Membership

(Check Desired Classification below)

- \$30 _____ Active
- \$25 _____ Associate
- \$50 _____ Supporting
- \$15 _____ Active Student
- \$10 _____ Associate Student

Personal Information:

Name: _____
Company (Supporting members only): _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Professional Information:

Employer (if outdoor-related): _____ Position: _____
Business Address: _____
Business Phone: _____

1. Describe your work in the outdoor field: Full Time _____ Part Time _____

2. Check your field(s) of outdoor work:

_____ Newspapers	_____ Magazine	_____ Photography
_____ Books	_____ Radio	_____ Lectures
_____ Television	_____ Teaching	_____ Trade Journals
_____ Artist	_____ Public relations	_____ Government Info - Ed
_____ Other (Specify): _____		

3. Are you paid for your outdoor work? Yes _____ No _____

4. Your work is published or disseminated: Daily ____; Weekly ____; Monthly ____; ____ times a year

Attach samples or other proof of your work in the outdoor field: newspaper clips, letters from station managers attesting to frequency of radio or TV broadcasts, lecture schedule or publicity clips, photo clips or artistic prints, title of latest book, masthead of trade journal showing your position, etc.

Send completed application and article copies to: **Tom Berg, 2142 Nondorf Street, Dyer, IN 46311.**

I have read the principles and membership requirements of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers and would like to enroll in the classification checked above.

Signature: _____

Sponsor: _____

Who We Are

The Hoosier Outdoor Writers was formed in 1969 and has brought together many diverse groups and individuals with shared interests. The Hoosier Outdoor Writers, known among its members as HOW, is a group of dedicated professionals who are keenly interested in the wise use of natural resources in the Hoosier State.

What We Do

These are the purposes of HOW:

1. To improve ourselves in the art, skill and effectiveness of our craft, and to increase knowledge and understanding of the whole State.
2. To help insure the wisest and best conservation of Indiana's resources, and the most wide-spread fair use of Indiana's recreational potential.
3. To provide a vehicle for bringing together and joining in common cause all Hoosiers who by profession, hobby or interest are devoted to the outdoors.
4. Conduct an annual Awards-In-Craft Contest among its members. The award winners are announced each year at HOW's annual meeting held in Indianapolis.

What We Stand For

These are what we strive to accomplish:

1. To give the profession of outdoor writing/reporting greater recognition and understanding, even higher standards and enlarged scope.
2. To encourage and enforce high standards of professional ethics.
3. To strive always for the truth, accuracy, clarity and completeness in the dissemination of outdoor information.
4. To help friends and fight the foes of wisely conserved Indiana resources.

Membership Requirements

Membership is open to anyone who meets one of the following:

1. Active

Members are those regularly engaged in the paid dissemination of outdoor-oriented information via newspapers, radio, television, magazines, trade journals, books, photographs, art, lectures, or other fitting media. (Basic guidelines of "regularity" of dissemination are: 20 newspaper articles, photos or broadcasts a year; two national or four regional



magazines or specialty journal articles a year, or one book, 10 lectures, or 20 bona fide outdoor news releases a year.)

The legal advisor for the association shall be an active member without meeting the basic guidelines.

2. Associate

Members are those who have a strong direct interest in the outdoors, either professional or personal, such as conservationists of all kinds; public employees in outdoor fields; educators teaching related subjects; certain sportsmen and retail-level dealers in outdoor goods, equipment or facilities.

3. Supporting

Members are those engaged in major commercial efforts directly related to the outdoors, such as manufacturers, distributors, manufacturers' representatives, or advertising agencies serving any of these.

4. Active Student

Members are those between the ages of 18 and 24 years who are bona fide college students with a major in journalism, communications, or natural resources sciences.

5. Associate Student

Members are those who are students who have an active interest in the outdoors in the areas of hunting, fishing, ecology, or in preserving the environment in general.

Calendar of Events

AGLOW Annual Conference: September 21-25, 2009
Gaylord, MI

**Fur Takers of America Chapter 7B
Fall Rendezvous** September 26, 2009
Greenwood, IN

Hoosier Outdoor Experience: September 26-27, 2009
(www.hoosieroutdoorexperience.IN.gov)
Indianapolis, IN

AGLOW Spring Mega Media Event: May 4-7, 2010
Details to follow...

HOW Annual Conference: Summer, 2010
Details to follow...

HOW members may submit upcoming events, along with dates, locations and other details to the newsletter editor at: thomas.berg@comcast.net for possible inclusion in future issues of The Blade.