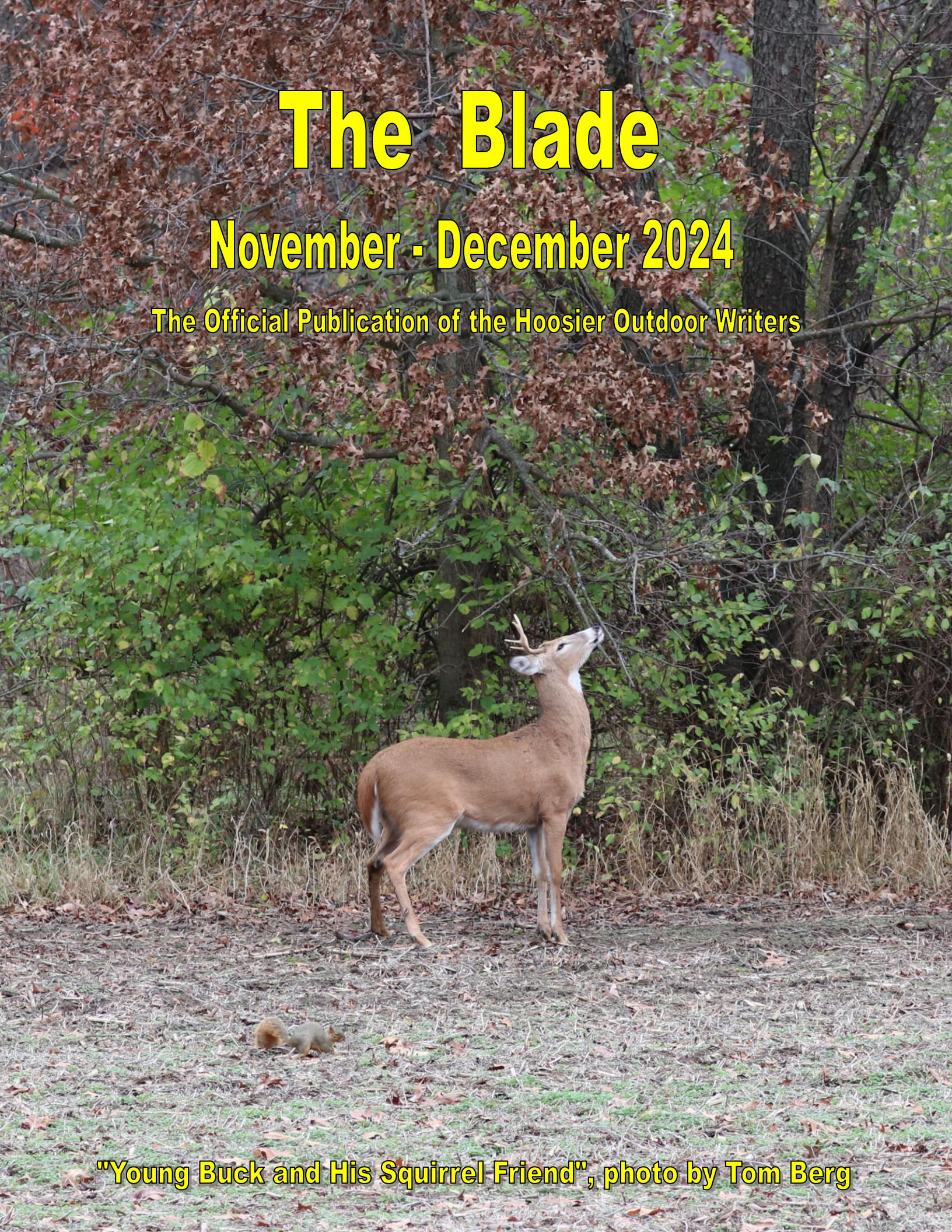


# The Blade

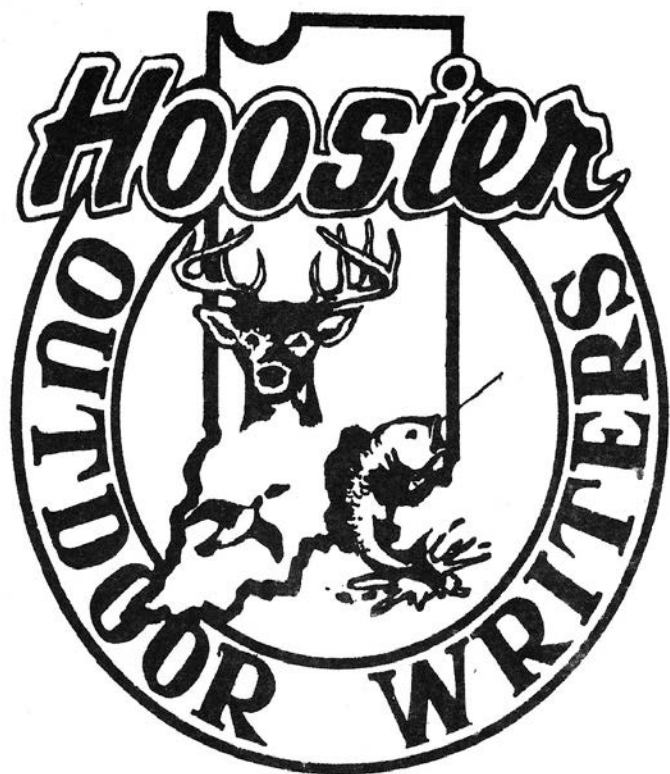
November - December 2024

The Official Publication of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers



"Young Buck and His Squirrel Friend", photo by Tom Berg





# 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 media professionals who are keenly interested in the wise use of natural resources in the Hoosier State.

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Region 2 – Rich Creason  
2025  
Region 3 – Gary Redmon  
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### At Large:

Phil Bloom – 2025  
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Brent Wheat – 2025  
Rick Bramwell – 2026  
Don Cranfill – 2026  
Scott Weaver – 2026

All submissions and correspondence in regards to the newsletter should be directed to: Tom Berg (e-mail: [director@hoosieroutdoorwriters.org](mailto:director@hoosieroutdoorwriters.org)), or to Tom Berg, 2142 Nondorf St., Dyer, IN 46311. Portions of this newsletter may be reproduced only with the permission of the Hoosier Outdoor Writer's Executive Board and/or the permission of the original author or authors submitting the material. HOW website: [www.HoosierOutdoorWriters.org](http://www.HoosierOutdoorWriters.org).

**On the cover:** This young buck was busy sniffing the low-hanging branches of the trees on his home turf and making some impromptu scrapes directly in front of the tree stand Tom Berg was sitting in on opening weekend. The fox squirrel was just going about his normal business! Photo by Tom Berg.

# President's Message

*by Ranger Bob Sawtelle*

## Exploring the Cumberland River

My first flyfishing trip to the Cumberland River in Kentucky was by invitation of fellow HOW member Dean Shadley and a few of his fellow Indiana Conservation Officers at the time. I believe we made those first trips in the late 1980's.

We fished and explored the river below the Wolf Creek Dam and its Federal trout fish hatchery. Wolf Creek Dam holds back the waters of Lake Cumberland at Jamestown, KY. Its 60 mile tailwater fishery is by far one of the most renowned and productive trout fisheries in the eastern United States. The grand slam of trout species includes trophy-sized brown and rainbow trout and also includes cutthroat and brook trout. Although all are released as hatchery raised stockers, many of the fish survive and carry over to the next year or more. The Cumberland also produces big trout; many 15-to-20-inch fish are landed every year.



Initially, we almost exclusively wade-fished at Helms Landing and the Rockhouse Natural Bridge, and ended the day at a low water gravel bar at Winfrey's Landing. It soon became apparent, however, that if you really wanted to experience the full potential and best action on the Cumberland you needed to fish from a boat.

The Cumberland River rises quickly and with forceful currents when electric generation begins with more than one generator at the dam. Whether wading or fishing from a boat, all anglers must remain constantly aware and look for changing river levels and the velocity of its currents.

I believe the most effective and likely the safest way to fish is from a boat. Although float fishing from kayaks and drift boats at lower discharge levels can be productive, most anglers opt for motorized watercraft. I have an 18-foot center console jonboat powered by a 4-stroke 50hp motor. Also, my trolling motor has more than 70 pounds of thrust. The advantage of using a boat is that you can repeat successful drifts by simply motoring back upstream. Trolling motors are a must for controlling the boat position when drifting downstream, too. The other advantage is that with a motor you can start and finish your day from the same boat access ramp. When your downstream drift is done, simply motor back to where you started. There is rarely a need for shuttle services.

Even if you are an experienced river boat operator, I always advise that you **hire a proven guide** for your first float down the river, **always check the daily generation schedule** and **always wear your life jacket**.

“Log onto the Army Corps of Engineers Nashville District Web Site at [www.lrn.usace.army.mil/](http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil/) and search for Lake Cumberland generator schedule. The daily fishing report contains the 24-hour generation schedule for Wolf Creek Dam. Boaters may also call 606-678-8697 for current information ([www.fw.ky.gov](http://www.fw.ky.gov) Cumberland River Tailwater).

(continued next page)



My “Go To” fishing guide for the Wolf Creek Dam to Winfrey’s Ferry boat ramp section is Dave DeBold (Double D Outfitters). Text him at 502-432-5188. I’m always happy with the size of the fish we catch and numbers landed. Dave continues to teach me stuff about catching trout!

Other good choices include: Rainbow Guide Service ([www.rainbowguideservice.com](http://www.rainbowguideservice.com)) and Cumberland Bottom Ticklers ([www.cumberlandbottomticklers.com](http://www.cumberlandbottomticklers.com)).

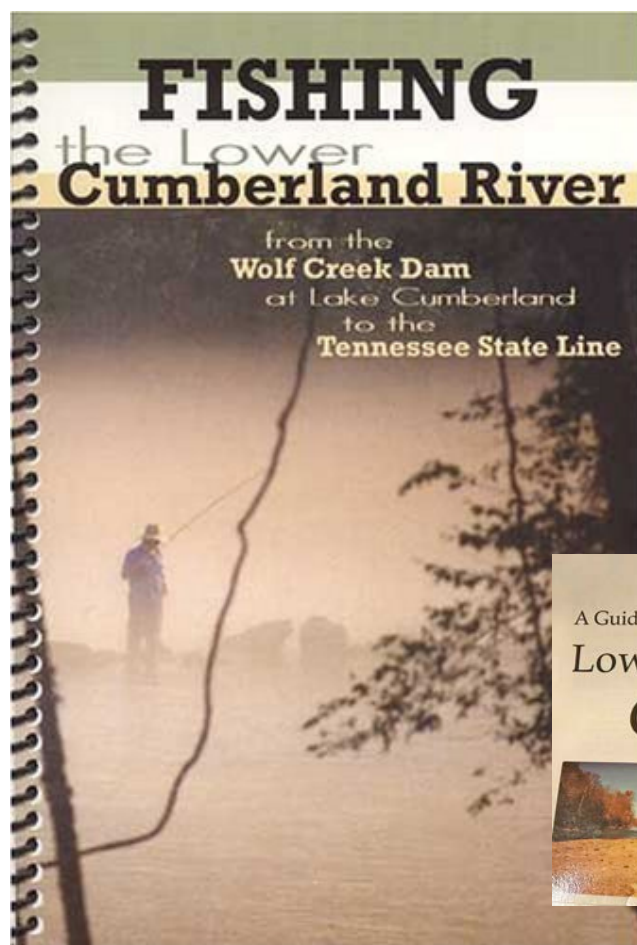
You can also become a member of our Derby City Fly Fishers anglers club and join us on one of our many membership-only Cumberland River fishing events (email: [membership@derbycityflyfishers.com](mailto:membership@derbycityflyfishers.com)).

The two river informative guides/maps that have been the most helpful to me are (they are hard to find):

1. “A Guide to the Lower Cumberland River” By Gerald McDaniel.
2. “Fishing the Lower Cumberland River, from Wolf Creek Dam at Lake Cumberland to the Tennessee State Line”.

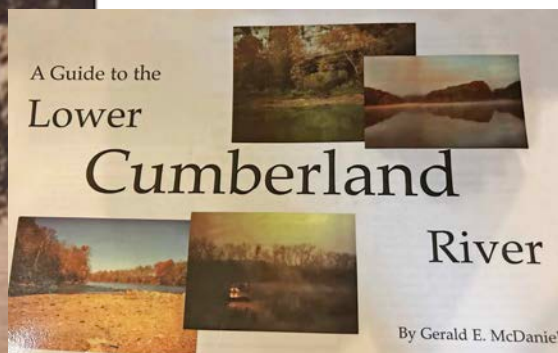


Dave DeBold (left) holds a nice Cumberland River rainbow trout caught by Bob Sawtelle.



Anglers looking to stay overnight have many options. Camping at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Kendall Recreation Area and Campground is handy and has the first boat ramp below the dam. It has just recently been repaired and enhanced with ample boat trailer parking, restrooms and picnic area.

Another choice is Riverside Retreat at Helms Landing, call Paula at 270-566-4944. This property sits directly above the KY F&W public access boat ramp. Vehicle and boat trailer parking are limited. Another option is Trout Haus, 784 Logan Antle Rd., Jamestown, KY. It has its own private boat access ramp and parking.



Finally, you might try the Alpine Motel of Burksville, KY 270-864-7100. It overlooks the town and the Cumberland River Valley. The Town of Burksville also maintains a

nice public boat ramp for visitor use.

# The Hoosier Outdoor Writers

New Members, Past Presidents and Memorial Section

## HOW Extends a Warm Welcome to our Growing Ranks of Outdoor Communicators:

**Collin Mann (Associate)**  
**Cloverdale, IN**  
**Sponsor: Tom Berg**

## Memorial to Deceased HOW Members Those Who Have Gone Before Us:

Jack Alkire – HOW President 1979  
Bill Beeman – Executive Director Emeritus  
    Don Bickel  
    Ed Blann  
    Charlie Brown  
    Gary Carden  
Jim “Moose” Carden – HOW President 1982-83  
    George Carey  
    John Case  
Bill Church – HOW President 1972  
    Gene Clifford  
    Jack “Big Jake” Cooper  
    Mark Cottingham  
Larry Crecelius – HOW President 2003  
    Jerry Criss  
    Gary “Dox” Duxtater  
    Dick Forbes  
Tom Glancy – HOW President 1977  
    Dale Griffith  
    Phil Hawkins  
    Fred Heckman  
Marty Jaranowski – HOW President 1996  
    Jack Kerins  
Mike Lyle – HOW President 1981  
Ralph “Cork” McHargue – HOW President 1976  
    Dick Mercier  
    Bob Nesbit  
    Hellen Ochs  
    Jack Parry  
    Harry Renfro  
“Bayou” Bill Scifres – HOW President – **6 Terms**  
    George Seketa  
    Hal Shymkus  
    Al Spiers  
Robert “Doc” Stunkard  
    Butch Tackett  
    George Tilford  
    John Trout, Jr.  
    Joe West

## Past Presidents of HOW

“Bayou” Bill Scifres	1969
“Bayou” Bill Scifres	1970
“Bayou” Bill Scifres	1971
Bill Church	1972
Rick Bramwell	1973
Jack Ennis	1974
Phil Junker	1975
Ralph “Cork” 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
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
John Maxwell	2010
Brandon Butler	2011
Josh Lantz	2012
Ben Shadley	2013
Bob Sawtelle	2014
Alan Garbers	2015
Ken McBroom	2016
Don Cranfill	2017
Troy McCormick	2018
Mike Schoonveld	2019
Kenny Bayless	2020
Kenny Bayless	2021
Phil Seng	2022
Jarrett Manek	2023



# HOW Conference Announcement

## 2025 Conference Site And Conference Dates Chosen

We printed this announcement in the May-June issue, but we are repeating it again. The Hoosier Outdoor Writers are pleased to announce that the 2025 HOW Conference will be held in Madison, IN at the Clifty Inn inside Clifty Falls State Park. The conference will take place on the weekend of April 4-6, 2025, with the main meeting occurring on Saturday, April 5th.

The date of this conference was chosen very carefully to minimize conflicts with Easter, Mother's Day, turkey season and other spring events, so hopefully most HOW members will be able to plan their schedules ahead of time so they can attend. So be sure to mark your calendars and **SAVE THE DATE!**



A view of one of the four main waterfalls  
inside beautiful Clifty Falls State Park.



As usual, we will have plenty of interesting seminars and speakers at this conference. We will also announce the winners of our annual awards-in-craft contests and elect new officers.

For everyone who has come to love the HOW

Raffle over the past several years, we are planning to make it even bigger and better this year. It will be hard to top the quality and quantity of the last couple of years, but we will do our best! If you haven't attended a conference recently, come see what it's all about!

More details will be forthcoming in future editions of *The Blade*. If you have never been to Clifty Falls State Park, you owe it to yourself to visit next spring. Whether you plan to attend the entire weekend or just the annual meeting on Saturday, the trip to Madison will definitely be worth it. Don't miss the 2025 HOW conference!

## Save The Date!

**Conference: April 4-6, 2025**  
**Annual Meeting: April 5, 2025**

# **The 2025 HOW Awards-In-Craft Contest**

**The Hoosier Outdoor Writers  
would like to thank:**

**QUAD 4 PLASTICS**

**For sponsoring the 2025  
HOW Awards-In-Craft Contests**





# HOW Awards-in-Craft Sponsor News

The Hoosier Outdoor Writers group is pleased to announce that HOW Past President Brian Smith (2006-2007) is returning to the fold and will be among our HOW Supporting Members going forward. Smith is currently the Director of Sales and Marketing at **Quad 4 Plastics**, an innovative company based right here in Elkhart, Indiana. If an item is made of plastic, Smith reports that Quad 4 Plastics can make it! In fact, Quad 4 Plastics was named the “Precision Injection Molding Company of the Year in 2024”.

Smith has not only re-joined HOW, he has agreed to have Quad 4 Plastics be the new official sponsor of the HOW Awards-in-Craft contests for 2025.

This is great news, because long-time sponsor Toyota Motor Sales notified us recently that they will no longer be able to sponsor the AIC contests. We definitely look forward to working with Brian Smith and Quad 4 Plastics this year and into the future.



Smith is planning to attend the 2025 HOW Conference which will be held in Madison, IN at the Clifty Inn inside Clifty Falls State Park in early April. Be sure to attend the conference and say hello to Brian!

## Brian Smith

Director of Sales and Marketing

Quad 4 Plastics

Email: [b.smith@quad4plastics.com](mailto:b.smith@quad4plastics.com)

Office: 574-293-8660

Cell: 574-274-2112





# The 2025 HOW Awards-In-Craft Contest

## HOW CRAFTS AWARD CONTEST RULES

The contest year shall be for material published or aired from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024. All submissions, including photography, must have been printed, aired, published or electronically posted during the contest year (entrant must have been a HOW member when the work was published).

The author, photographer or broadcaster must be an Active or Associate member of HOW.

The author, photographer or broadcaster must have been paid a standard rate for any work entered in the contest. Photos or articles published on a private Website or a not-for-hire Website will not be accepted. Photos/articles that are published, or radio/TV programs that are broadcast in trade for advertising or other non-monetary remuneration or for gratuitous fees (such as \$1) are not permitted.

At this time, blogs will not be accepted as an article. Photo essays (where the only writing is in the captions) will also not be accepted as an article. These types of entries will be disqualified.

This year we will again allow electronic submissions only. We no longer accept paper entries. This has resulted in much less work for entrants, contest coordinators and judges. It also conserves valuable natural resources, which is something of which we can all be proud. Entries must be submitted via email. The only exception is the broadcast division, where tapes and CD/DVDs are also allowed. See the rules below for more details.

### **RULES FOR SUBMISSION**

- 1) Contest entries must be in an electronic form. Entries must be emailed no later than midnight on February 15, 2025. Entries emailed after that date will be disqualified. Send all entries to the proper contest coordinator.
- 2) An official HOW contest entry form must accompany each entry. The entry form must also be sent electronically. Please type entry details into the form (an electronic copy of the form will be provided).
- 3) Send no material that needs to be returned. No original material is required. As mentioned above, print contest entries and photo contest entries must be sent in an electronic form. In the broadcast contest, tapes, recordings and DVDs are welcome.
- 4) All submissions of print entries (either from traditional paper or electronic media) must consist of one electronic copy of each article with bylines removed. This file must be text only – do not scan tearsheets or newspaper/magazine pages. Do not include photos or photo captions. This electronic copy must be submitted as a Microsoft Word Document (.doc) or as a PDF file (.pdf). Entries not following these rules will be disqualified. As mentioned, print entry files must be emailed by the deadline.
- 5) Entries into the broadcast category require only one tape or recording and may be sent by tape cassette, CD, VHS or DVD formats. Radio and television entries may carry the broadcast station's name and call letters if they are on "as aired" dubbed tapes. TV entries should be dubbed minus commercials if possible to facilitate judging.
- 6) Entries in the photography division must consist of one electronic (digital) copy of each photo. This electronic copy must be saved as a JPEG file (.jpg or .jpeg). Prints, slides and paper copies of photos will not be accepted. Please include a title for each photo entry. Digitally produced photos should not be substantially manipulated. Allowable photo enhancement is limited to standard shooting/darkroom techniques, such as color correction, contrast control and image cropping.
- 7) An individual article, photo or broadcast may only be entered in one category/division. Entering the same piece in multiple categories/divisions will result in the disqualification of duplicate entries.
- 8) There is a limit of two entries per category.

**For all Article entries, send submissions to the Writing Contest Coordinator:**

Dave Hoffman, Email: [contest@hoosieroutdoorwriters.org](mailto:contest@hoosieroutdoorwriters.org)

**For all Photography entries, send submissions to the Photo Contest Coordinator:**

John Martino, Email: [jmartinooutdoors@att.net](mailto:jmartinooutdoors@att.net)

**For all Broadcast entries, send submissions to the Broadcast Contest Coordinator:**

Tom Berg, Email: [thomas.berg@comcast.net](mailto:thomas.berg@comcast.net)

### **CONTEST DIVISIONS**

- 1) Writing articles published as 1,000 words or less (Magazine, Newspaper, E-zine).
- 2) Writing articles published as more than 1,000 words (Magazine, Newspaper, E-zine).
- 3) Photography
- 4) Broadcast (Radio-TV-Video)

### **WRITING ARTICLE CATEGORIES**

- 1) Hunting/Trapping
- 2) Fishing
- 3) Conservation
- 4) General Outdoors (other than hunting, fishing, trapping)

### **BROADCAST CATEGORIES**

- 9) Best Radio Broadcast
- 10) Best TV Broadcast
- 11) Best Video

### **PHOTOGRAPHY CATEGORIES**

- 5) Hunting/Trapping
- 6) Fishing
- 7) Outdoor Scenic
- 8) Outdoor Recreation (other than hunting, fishing, trapping)

## **2025 HOW AWARDS-IN-CRAFT CONTEST ENTRY FORM**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Category \_\_\_\_\_ Division \_\_\_\_\_

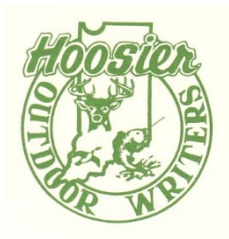
Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Where published/aired: \_\_\_\_\_

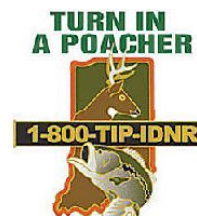
Publication/air date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Entries and forms must be emailed or postmarked no later than February 15, 2025**





## Hoosier Outdoor Writers Turn in a Poacher/Polluter Writing Contest Official 2024 Contest Guidelines



Once again, the Indiana Turn in a Poacher (TIP) Citizen's Advisory Board is sponsoring a writing contest to encourage HOW members to promote the TIP mission and the hotline. This year prizes are again **\$500 for first place; \$300 for second place; \$200 for third place.** Be sure to write your TIP article right away!

Requirements are simple and entering is easy! Article must be at least 400 words in length and must include:

1. Brief description of TIP (see below—does not have to be verbatim)
2. TIP Hotline (1-800-TIP-IDNR)

Although it is not required, preference will be given to stories that:

- Feature a compelling story that demonstrates how TIP can help conserve or protect fish and wildlife for the people of Indiana.
- Are published in paid publications.

To enter, submit an electronic copy of an article published between **January 1, 2024** and **December 31, 2024**. The TIP Citizen's Advisory Board will review all entries and will select the entries that best promote the mission of TIP and encourage citizens to get involved.

**Entries should be marked as "TIP" entries and sent to Contest Coordinator Phil Seng ([phil@djcase.com](mailto:phil@djcase.com)). They must be emailed by March 1, 2025.**

### What is TIP?

Turn in a Poacher and Polluter, Inc. (TIP) is a non-profit conservation organization that works hand-in-hand with Indiana DNR Law Enforcement to protect our fish and wildlife resources by increasing public support and involvement in bringing violators to justice.

A poacher is a thief who illegally steals wildlife that belongs to each Indiana citizen. Poachers rob licensed, ethical hunters and anglers from recreational opportunities they bought through license fees. Pollution kills Indiana's valuable fish and wildlife resources and harms habitat.

Citizens can help stop poachers and polluters in two ways. If you see, hear or learn about a poacher or pollution that results in the death of fish and wildlife, or any other fish and wildlife violation:

- Call 1-800-TIP-IDNR
- Submit a TIP online at [www.tip.IN.gov](http://www.tip.IN.gov)

If your TIP leads to an arrest, you may receive as much as a \$500 reward, and you can remain anonymous. More information is available at <https://www.in.gov/dnr/lawenfor/2745.htm>



## Interesting Bird Sightings in the Great Outdoors

We have been asking HOW members to submit photos and reports about interesting or unusual birds that they have seen during their outdoor adventures. The sightings do not have to take place in Indiana; anywhere in the world is fair game. All photos here were submitted by those reporting.

We hope this page will not only interest bird enthusiasts, but all HOW members who enjoy spending time in the great outdoors (i.e. everybody). You may just learn something new, too!

### Report from Mike Lunsford:

HOW member Mike Lunsford is often seen birding on his own property and in nearby woods, and that is especially true at this time of year. Here is his report:

“This fall turned out to be a great warbler season for me,” said Lunsford. “But those colorful birds gave way to cooler weather and huge numbers of woodpeckers, hawks, and jays here in my end of Parke County. I have gone nowhere special for birding, but have had great luck in finding all sorts of birds close to home. House finches and purple finches have been in abundance here, as have the usual goldfinches, chickadees, nuthatches, cardinals, and titmice.”



“I was on a walking trail near Rosedale in early November and managed to take photos of just about every kind of woodpecker seen in Indiana, all within an hour; I even heard but didn’t see a pileated woodpecker. I did, however, find **Yellow-Bellied Sapsuckers** (*Sphyrapicus varius*) in great numbers – both young and old. Despite most of the leaves being down, I caught this juvenile sapsucker (seen at left) with a colorful Autumn background, and for a few minutes, three or four of

these birds stayed around out of curiosity. I have the most luck finding sapsuckers near black cherry trees, which produce about as much sap as any tree I know.”

“I photographed this young **Cooper’s Hawk** (*Astur cooperii*) as it sat atop an old privacy fence eating a songbird it had nabbed. It sat in the same spot for 10 minutes or so as it not only slowly ate the bird, but seemed to be looking for another. This is a young hawk – its yellow eyes suggest that. Although we see a lot of Cooper’s hawks, they are actually on the endangered, threatened, and special concern lists of 16 eastern states. They are closely related to harriers, and those are among my favorite birds to photograph when the snow flies and the winter winds blow!



**HOW members** are encouraged to send their interesting bird photos to newsletter editor and bird enthusiast Tom Berg via email ([thomas.berg@comcast.net](mailto:thomas.berg@comcast.net)) for use in future editions of the “Interesting Bird Sightings” page. Don’t worry, it does not need to be a rare bird. Your fellow HOW members would love to see your cool bird pictures.



Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
402 W. Washington St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

**For immediate release:** November 12, 2024

## Spring Mill Inn to Reopen After Extensive Renovations



The newly renovated Spring Mill Inn at Spring Mill State Park recently held an open house on November 20. The historic inn, located in Mitchell, has been closed for renovations since November, 2022. Originally opened in 1939, the inn was due for significant mechanical modernizations, accessibility upgrades, and cosmetic room and conference facility improvements. Reservations for lodging can be made by calling 1-877-LODGES-1 or visiting [IndianaInns.com](https://IndianaInns.com).

“Following extensive renovations honoring the history of this special place, we can’t wait to officially welcome guests back to Spring Mill Inn,” said DNR director Dan Bortner. “Its location in the heart of Spring Mill State Park with so many unique features makes it an attraction for Hoosiers and for our guests from other states. The investments made in the infrastructure and cosmetic features of the inn will ensure it is a place where we can all make memories for years to come with family and friends.” Following the renovations, guests will now enter the front doors to an accessible lobby and a centrally located registration desk, alongside a fireplace ready for guests to sit and relax. The new gift shop will offer souvenir items along with self-serve snacks and drinks 24 hours a day. The downstairs lobby area will provide comfortable gathering spaces for music, family games, reading, and relaxing by the fireplace. The new family-friendly splash pad that’s still under construction will feature both indoor and outdoor elements when completed.

The look and feel of the inn remain true to the original rustic pioneer atmosphere, but with modern conveniences. The same tables and chairs, beautifully refinished, will return to the Millstone Dining Room. A new buffet unit will provide group dining for conference and meeting attendees, and it will periodically accompany the restaurant’s daily menu.

Meeting rooms will be available for conferences, group meetings, banquets and weddings. The Lakeview Room, with its expansive view of Spring Mill Lake, has been equipped with bird-friendly windows designed to reduce bird collisions. For inquiries about holding weddings, banquets, and conferences at Spring Mill Inn, email [cfouke@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:cfouke@dnr.IN.gov).

Less-visible upgrades include new HVAC, new water lines, and a new fire alarm and sprinkler system. A generator has been installed that will power the inn when electricity is down due to storms. Parking garage improvements include work on the facades, staircases and traffic flow. Read more about the work that has been done at [dnr.IN.gov/state-parks/inns/spring-mill-inn-at-spring-mill-state-park/renovation/](https://dnr.IN.gov/state-parks/inns/spring-mill-inn-at-spring-mill-state-park/renovation/).

**Media contact:** Ginger Murphy, deputy director, Division of State Parks: 317-232-4143.

# Expedition Unknown Comes to Indiana

Story and photos by Troy McCormick

Every now and then an opportunity arises in life that makes you sit back and think “I never thought this would happen to me.” My opportunity arose from a phone call that I received from a Hollywood producer, and he asked me if I could help put together an episode of the popular TV show, Expedition Unknown.



Without question, Expedition Unknown is my favorite show on TV, and the adventures that show host Josh Gates gets into during his travels around the world are simply amazing. For those that haven't seen the show, it is an adventure and treasure hunting show on the Discovery Channel. The show is distributed to 100+ million homes in the U.S., and can be seen in 224 countries and territories around the world.

My amazing opportunity actually began when the show producers called HOW past president, Alan Garbers, about a magazine article that he had written 20+ years ago on the Reno Gang, a notorious bunch of outlaws that staged the first train robbery in America, which happened in Seymour, Indiana. The producers needed someone that knew the story and knew about metal detectors. Alan told them he was now living in Arizona, but he knew just the guy in Indiana for what they needed.

I have metal detected and treasure hunted for several decades and love just about any outdoor adventure. In fact, I have filmed and produced episodes on metal detecting, and Minelab Metal Detectors was a sponsor of my own TV show, Bootprints.TV.

During the next couple of months my collaboration with Ping Pong Productions included research, site visits, development of a video treatment, and recommended places to film. During my in-depth research of the story I discovered the original homesite of the Reno Brothers, which I believe could have been where they buried \$96,000 in gold

(continued on next page)



from their last train robbery. Because they were caught shortly after that robbery and hung by a vigilante mob, I felt the treasure was still buried on the family farm.



I was also able to locate a lost cave that was rumored to have been a hideout of the Renos, and where gold and silver was reported to have been buried. The site was supposed to be recognizable due to stories about historic rock carvings on a boulder near the cave entrance, which we found.

To be honest, I would have worked on the show for free, just to have been part of the production, but they paid me as an “Expert” and I secured the role of treasure hunter on the episode with Josh Gates, which was invaluable to me as a fan of the show.

We spent a total of four days filming the episode in and around Seymour, and I got to work with the professionals of a large-scale television show. The number of people and amount of camera equipment was astounding. They had a crew of ten people and a couple vehicles full of gear.



We worked long, 12-hour days that were filled with multiple takes of every scene. I was filmed metal detecting and cave exploring with Josh Gates and we had a true adventure. I mean, we didn’t go rappelling off of sea cliffs, or get lost in a jungle, which does sometimes happen to Josh in other episodes. After all, this is Indiana and we were limited on how dangerous and adventurous our treasure hunt could be.



I’ll not ruin the story by telling you if we found the gold or not; you’ll have to watch it yourself (Season 14, Episode 5). But I personally found a lifetime experience behind the scenes, and in front of the lens, during my time with Expedition Unknown. What an adventure!



# Coon Trapping is “On” This Season

Story by Mike Schoonveld, photos by Tom Berg

Not long after teaching myself to trap muskrats three decades ago, I decided it was time for me to move up to bigger game in the furbearer world – raccoons. Raccoons aren’t the wildest critter to catch, but I quickly learned catching a raccoon in wild habitats isn’t the same as catching one that’s raiding birdfeeders or garbage cans.

Though operating my trapline and selling the furbearers I catch has never been all that stood between providing for my family and going on the dole, I get a smile on my face with every fur check I cash. I also get a smile when I think of the warm, stylish garments the pelts I sell will be used to make, secure in the knowledge these coats, hats and other items are made from a sustainable resource.

Mostly, however, I trap for the same reason I hunt, fish, watch birds, pick mushrooms and do other outdoor activities. It’s enjoyable!



What I don’t do is head out to harvest anything just to assuage my “killer instinct.” For the past several years all but the largest, prime raccoons have been worthless in the fur trade. For the past few years I haven’t specifically set any traps for raccoons, other than nuisance animals. I caught enough raccoons in my coyote traps, usually big, well-furred animals that would sell for a few bucks and to supply raccoon meat to a local conservation club for their annual game dinner fund-raiser.

The price of furs at the producer level has always been boom or bust, but only in the past few years has fur values, even small raccoons and opossums been zero. Fur prices have always swung quickly and drastically in response to fashion trends, weather and international political policies. For instance, most raccoons from North America end up in Russia and Eastern Europe. Both the conflict in Ukraine and economic policies in China have tanked the demand for raccoons.



This season, the speculation by leading fur buying businesses has been cautiously optimistic. Prices aren’t soon going back to peak values when an extra-large male raccoon pelt was worth \$30 or more, but it’s not like I’ve seen in recent years when fur buyers wouldn’t buy anything but the best of the best at any price. It’s not as easy to release a small raccoon as it is an undersized fish.

So I’ve been setting some traps specifically for raccoons this season. I still enjoy the challenge, there’s going to be plenty of “sweet and sour” raccoon on the menu at the game dinner and I’ll have a grin when I see some larger numbers on my fur check.



# Backcountry Tarpon on the Fly!

Story by Tom Berg. Photos by Tom and Mike Berg

It's cold outside! Are you ready for a fishing road trip? Well, the Florida Keys are well-known for the excellent fishing that can be found there year-round. Whether you like inshore fishing or prefer to head offshore, there is always something biting. Tarpon are at the top of many anglers' wish lists, and although I've caught a few tarpon in Florida waters over the years, I have never fished for them in the Keys and never with a fly rod, either. That was about to change!

My brother Mike and I were staying on Marathon Key, one of the hottest locations in the Florida Keys for fishing, and we had booked an early morning fishing charter trip with tarpon as our prime target. Our guide for the day was Capt. Scott Collins (305-304-5965), one of the most knowledgeable and successful tarpon guides around.

It was still dark when we met Capt. Scott in the parking lot at the Seven Mile Fly Shop near the west end of Marathon. We wanted to get an early start before the heat of the day set in, and as an added benefit Capt. Scott said the tarpon would likely be more active before the sun got too high in the sky anyway. Mike and I hopped in Scott's truck and we headed for the boat ramp.

Once the boat was in the water, Capt. Scott steered towards some of the small backcountry islands dotting the shallow waters nearby. A few of the islands we passed were just tiny stands of mangroves clustered together, while others were fairly expansive islands with a mixture of mangroves and larger hardwood trees.

As we approached one of the larger islands, Capt. Scott cut the engine and let the boat drift as he scanned the water for tarpon. He told us to keep an eye out for porpoising or tailing tarpon, too. We were searching for small pods of active fish where we could present a fly to them, but we would have to act fast because these fish would be cruising and not sitting still.



The boat drifted to within several feet of the island's southernmost point, and suddenly Capt. Scott yelled and grabbed the fly rod lying beside him. A small pod of three or four tarpon had suddenly appeared at the surface, and there was no time to hand the rod to either me or Mike. Capt. Scott made a very short cast, and as soon as the yellow fly hit the water – just 10 feet from the boat – the water erupted as a tarpon engulfed the bait!

Capt. Scott set the hook with a quick strip of the line, and the fish took off like a freight train! He handed the rod to Mike, and Mike held on as the tarpon sped away. He really had his hands full! The fish was swimming full speed, and before Mike could get all of the fly line back on the reel his fish was airborne!



The fish landed with a big splash and then went airborne again! Mike got control of the reel and started playing the fish, but the tarpon was not interested in slowing down. After two more tremendous leaps, though, the fish began to tire. Mike started gaining line and soon the tarpon was only a few feet from the boat.

Capt. Scott leaned out over the water and was able to grab the fish by its bottom jaw. Success! And Mike's first tarpon on a fly! These fish are not the 100-pound adults that appear in Boca Grande Pass and other places in the early summertime. These tarpon are juveniles for the most part (two or three feet long), but they still fight like crazy and leap clear out of the water several times before coming to the boat.

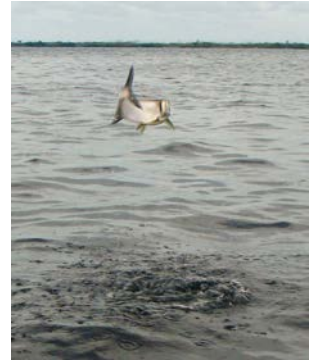
Capt. Scott released Mike's fish and then it was my turn. The small pod of tarpon that Mike's fish came from was long gone, so we started looking for new fish. It didn't take Capt. Scott long to spot a new group of fish, but they were a little too far away for me

to get a fly in front of them and they quickly disappeared.

We continued moving along slowly as Capt. Scott silently poled us forward, scanning the water all around us. Suddenly he hissed “Fish – almost straight ahead! Cast to eleven o’clock!” I looked forward and slightly left and saw the dorsal fin of a tarpon break the surface, followed by the tail of another fish right behind it. They were moving fast, so I knew I only had a couple of seconds to get the bait to them.

I tried to cast the fly in front of the moving pod of fish, but it landed three feet short and near the center of the pod rather than in front of it. I groaned and thought I would need to re-cast, when the water unexpectedly boiled as a hungry tarpon grabbed the fly! I swept the rod back to set the hook, and the tarpon took off like greased lightning!

It immediately jumped and cleared the water by three or four feet, then landed in a shower of water. I bowed to the fish as it jumped again, and my adrenaline was really pumping! When it jumped for the third time, I saw the fly shake loose and the fish disappeared. It was gone!



I wondered how the hook came loose, and Capt. Scott told me not to set the hook with the rod – it was too limber. He told me to do a ‘strip-set’ instead. “Point the rod at the fish and strip the line towards you when the fish grabs the bait,” he said. “That will give you a solid hookset. Don’t worry, you will get a chance to redeem yourself.”

He was right. Just a few minutes later another pod of fish cruised within casting range and this time I placed the fly more accurately. The lead fish instantly saw the fly when it hit the water and slammed it! I pointed the rod at the fish and stripped the line to set the hook, and the tarpon screamed away on a powerful run. Fish on! Almost immediately the tarpon leaped clear out of the water, and as soon as it landed it jumped again. I held on as it continued jumping – three times – four – five times! Wow, these fish can jump!

After its fifth jump I could tell the tarpon was beginning to tire. I fought it closer to the boat and marveled at its strength and beauty. Suddenly it came up to the surface and rolled, and I could see its bright silver scales shimmering in the sunlight. Capt. Scott lipped it as it came to the side of the boat and handed it to me for a photo. What a beautiful fish!

Mike and Capt. Scott snapped a couple quick photos, and then I gently released it. It swam away strongly and I hoped it would bring another angler the same joy it brought me when I caught it. Our trip wasn’t over yet, and Mike and I were both lucky enough to hook more fish before calling it quits for the day.



Capt. Scott Collins fishes the productive waters of the Florida Keys year-round, from Key Largo all the way to Key West. Our trip was in mid-September, but the fishing here is great throughout the fall and all winter long for a variety of species. Tarpon, permit, bonefish, sharks and other species are more than happy to come out and play!

The next time you go to the Florida Keys, get in touch with Capt. Scott Collins for a great day on the water. Visit his website ([www.captscottcollins.com](http://www.captscottcollins.com)) for more info or call or text him (305-304-5965). He can also be found on the website for the Lower Keys Guides Association at [www.LKGA.org](http://www.LKGA.org).

While fishing in the Florida Keys, we stayed at the beautiful Faro Blanco Resort ([www.faroblancoresort.com](http://www.faroblancoresort.com)) on Marathon Key. The accommodations were perfect and the staff was top-notch. We had an excellent dinner at the Lighthouse Kitchen & Bar restaurant at Faro Blanco one night, too. Besides world-class fishing, check out some of the other fun things to do at [www.fl-keys.com](http://www.fl-keys.com). There is so much to experience in the Florida Keys, I think I need to make a return trip!



# HOW Member News

## HOW Members Enjoy The 2024 Deer Season

**Ken McBroom (Benton, KY)**

This report is from HOW Past President and long-time deer hunter Ken McBroom:

“This deer season was special,” recalled McBroom. “I planned to take my nephew Rylee on his first deer hunt. I scouted and set up some trail cameras on limited public properties near home. I even stayed away from these areas to give Rylee the best chance at harvesting a deer. We had nice weather on opening morning and we saw a few deer, but we had no shot opportunities.”

“That evening it was drizzling rain and a little cold, but Rylee did well. A spike buck trotted in and stopped right in front of us, but Rylee missed. ‘That’s OK,’ I told him. ‘You had to hurry and it came in quick.’ I was hoping he would get another chance.”

“Rylee redeemed himself while hunting with a friend



**Top:** Rylee McBroom poses with his first whitetail deer, a fine buck. **Above Left:** Ken McBroom harvested this nice buck from the same area. **Above Right:** It's obvious that Ken and Rylee McBroom were having a great time in the woods. Photos courtesy of Ken McBroom.

a week later and harvested his first deer. I went back to the spot after Rylee went home and had a buck run a doe right to me. I was able to harvest the buck and fill the freezer.”

“This deer season was great – and the greatest part was seeing Rylee succeed. I’m sure he will be a hunter for life.”



## 2024 Deer Season Continued

### **Collin Mann (Cloverdale, IN)**

One of our newest HOW members, Collin Mann from Cloverdale, had a great deer season in the end, but for a while it looked bleak. Here is his report:

“It has been a long deer season for me,” commented Mann. “I spent countless hours in the stand through the second half of October and most of November. I was determined to bag a nice buck with my bow this year, but that didn’t happen.”

“I finally found an absolute giant buck around Thanksgiving. After several failed attempts to take him, I returned to my normal hunting location to try for a doe for the freezer. As the evenings went by I began to move my climber stand towards the north as the deer activity seemed to be concentrated in that area.”

“On Saturday, December 14th in Owen County, it all came together. A stampede of does came running into the woods that I was sitting in around 8:15am. I knew what that meant! The second rut was in full force and as expected, this 10-pointer was pushing them hard.”



“I was able to stop him when he got on the same ridge that my stand was on. He stopped broadside at 40 yards. I was able to take the shot easily with my muzzleloader. I am so blessed to have this buck. A bad year turned into a great year in a matter of seconds!”

### **Rick Bramwell (Pendleton, IN)**

A successful deer hunt is not always measured by whether or not a deer is harvested. Read HOW Past President Rick Bramwell’s report below:

“My deer season left much to be desired on the harvest side, but it was a success in many ways,” he said. “I saw most of my deer late in the season, a norm reversal. Small bucks, and does with rapidly maturing fawns, I saw in good numbers.”

“Last Wednesday morning was exciting,” he continued. “I busted a deer just at first light walking to my stand. There is a big tree rub nearby. Was this the buck that almost destroyed the tree? I hoped so. After spooking this deer, I decided the wind was coming from the wrong direction for where I wanted to set up. I walked back down the trail and climbed the gate back to my truck. The wind was from the southeast. I chose a different sitting spot facing a field to my east.”

“A deer in the field saw me first, blew, and took off. I unfolded my chair and took a seat. A couple of times, deer snorted and wheezed from the woods downwind. My eyes were focused on the field. At 8:58am, four deer came out of a wooded draw and turned towards me. At the fenceline, they stopped and began grazing. They were feeding into the wind and seemed relaxed. I was crosswind from them.”

“There were three does. Twin fawns were with one of the does. ‘This is your last chance,’ I said to myself. I watched the four deer until they slowly moved out of sight, taking about 25 minutes. When they disappeared, I slung my muzzleloader and folding chair over my shoulders and headed down the ridge. No complaints.”



## 2024 Deer Season Continued

### Brandon Butler (Armstrong, MO)

“We live in a country that grants us the privilege of pursuing fish and game for the betterment of ourselves and those we provide for,” said Butler. “Not many societies across the globe offer freedom at the level we enjoy here in the United States. Our rights to take a personally owned firearm out onto public lands in pursuit of public resources, is a concept foreign to most of our planet’s population. For this, and many other reasons, I am thankful to be an American living in this special country.”

“This past year has returned myself and my daughters to rural America. After a couple of years living in the city, we’re now out on a 40-acre farm. We have a farmer who plants soybeans on a large portion of our land, but we also have some woods, a couple of acres of brushy grasslands, and about a 3-acre lake. At our fingertips is more opportunity to participate in nature than we’ve ever had. It’s a dream come true and I’m incredibly thankful for it.”

“The dream isn’t the land, though. It’s the activity that happens on the land. The proverbial doors leading to this outdoor playground are there, but if my children and guests will walk through them has been the question. My youngest daughter, Annabel, certainly has and is growing more and more into a well-rounded outdoorswoman. She walks laps around the property with our dogs. She randomly grabs a fishing pole and sits on the dock. Her kayak is down by the lake ready for her to cruise around at any time. But the biggest surprise for me this year was when Annabel said she wanted to deer hunt.”

“My initial reaction was of concern. One of the qualities that make this kid so special is her infectious kindness. She has a gigantic heart, and killing a deer isn’t easy. In fact, I find it’s becoming harder and harder each year. I attribute this growing difficulty to an ever-deepening understanding of how hard life is for all living creatures, from the smallest insect to the largest man. Simply staying alive is a struggle each day for most species beyond our own, and I take no pride in ending the life of any creature. Putting food in our bellies is the original struggle and unfortunately for deer they are a solution to that problem for many predators, humans included.”

“Annabel has been eating deer meat her whole life. It started long before she even knew it, so while she has deep compassion for animals, she understands the life cycle. The fact she decided it was time to participate in the natural order came from within. I never pushed her to hunt. The door was always open, and she knew it, but it was up to her to walk through it. When she put the crosshairs of her scope on a buck and pulled the trigger, she did something I didn’t know if she was capable of or not.”



“Proud is an understatement. I feel a sense of completion. Perhaps no different than a bird feels the first time its chick plucks a worm from the soil. Although my daughter will likely never find herself at a place in life where hunting is a necessity for survival, she has proven she could do it if she had to. For this, I’m thankful.”

## 2024 Deer Season Continued

### Tom Berg (Dyer, IN)

HOW Executive Director Tom Berg was lucky enough to have another productive deer season this year. Here is his report:

“On opening day of the firearms season I saw two or three small bucks and several does, but nothing I wanted to take so early in the season,” said Berg. “But at about 3:00pm the next afternoon a larger buck came out of the treeline in the field to the west, about 200 yards away. He was coming towards me, but there were too many trees in the way to set up a shot. I used my binoculars to see that he was a decent buck and I decided I would try for him if I got the chance.”



“It looked like he was going to pass through the treeline where I was sitting and go on to the field on the east side of me. If he did that and turned south, I would not have a shot. But if he turned north he would present a perfect shot once he got to the middle of the eastern field.”

“I readied my Henry .308 Long Ranger rifle and pointed it to a gap in the trees where he might emerge. Surprisingly, that’s exactly where he was going. He was still walking slowly, and as soon as he got to the center of that field I took the shot. He was about 100 yards away. He jumped and then trotted straight ahead to the low fenceline that he had been heading for in the first place.”

“I watched as he hopped the fence and trotted to the northeast for several yards until he disappeared behind the brush and trees on that side of the fence. I knew I had taken a good shot, and I waited as long as I could stand it. I climbed down and found the spot where he jumped the fence, and I was just able to straddle the fence and get to the other side without much trouble. I found the blood trail on the other side of the fence and then discovered him laying about 30 yards away, in the middle of some thick, dry grass. I always feel very fortunate and thankful to harvest such a magnificent animal.”

“I also had a tag for a doe, so early the next morning I walked out to a different deer stand in the dark and got set up. I saw lots of fox squirrels all morning and watched a red-shouldered hawk fly down from a tree perch to land on the ground multiple times. He must have been hunting mice or voles, but I never saw him actually catch anything. I saw no deer at all that morning or during the afternoon hunt, either.”

“I was back at it the following weekend, and even though I moved between the two treestands depending on the direction of the wind, I saw very few deer. That Saturday and Sunday passed with no action, other than a couple of fawns I saw on one of the days.”

(continued on next page)



## 2024 Deer Season Continued

“Then on Monday, November 25th I was back in the stand before dawn. I was hoping to fill my doe tag. Again, I saw lots of squirrels, but no deer all morning. I was slightly discouraged when I quit for lunch.”

“In the early afternoon I headed back out to the treestand where I had taken the buck a week earlier. It was cloudy and extremely windy. The west wind kept increasing as the afternoon wore on, too, and a light drizzle had just started.”

“Roughly an hour after arriving in the stand, a doe and four fawns ran into the woods to the west of me and disappeared. About 45 minutes later, two of the fawns emerged from the woods again. The west wind was really howling by now, and intermittent drizzle was still coming down. The wind was whipping the drizzle so badly that I wouldn't be surprised if it was mostly frozen.”

“After the two fawns got about 15 yards from the trees, one other fawn and the doe came out, too, following them. I was hoping they would all keep coming east towards me, but I wasn't terribly hopeful.”



“I watched as the group of four deer kept moving in my direction. Suddenly the doe started trotting towards me, probably just so she could catch up with the fawns that were in the lead. In the middle of the field, about 50 yards away, the group of deer stopped. They were looking around and possibly sniffing the air, but since the wind was whipping from the west and blowing straight towards me, there was no way they could have winded me.”

“The fawns had started milling around, and the doe, which had just stopped, suddenly turned broadside to me, facing south. I put the crosshairs of my scope just behind the doe's shoulder and squeezed the trigger. The gun went off and the doe instantly started running to the southwest. The fawns ran a few feet to the south, but they didn't know what to do and two of them actually ran back north a little so they were back in my shooting field.”

“I watched the doe run all the way to a treeline to the south and disappear into the woods. I made a mental note of where she had entered the trees. The drizzle was becoming steady, so I put my rain coat on and packed up my gear before heading out to look for her.”

“The blood trail started a few feet inside the brushline where she entered the woods, and it was easy to follow once I found it. She was down 30 feet inside the woods. I always try to treat the animals I harvest with the utmost respect, and this was no exception. I was extremely thankful to be able to harvest her and help feed my family for the upcoming year.”

“What a great way to end my 2024 deer season.”



Tom Berg smiles over the whitetail doe he harvested on a very windy, rainy day in late November. Photo courtesy of Tom Berg.

## Alan Garbers Connects on Dream Pronghorn Hunt

“A pronghorn antelope hunt has been a bucket list item for me since before people called them bucket lists,” said Garbers. “As a younger man, I saw them every day on the grasslands of Yavapai County, Arizona. However, the ratio of hunters to game in Arizona was and still is lopsided, so an antelope tag is hard to win in the lottery. After moving back to Arizona, the dream of hunting pronghorn rekindled. But I’m not as young any more, and my body parts don’t work as well as they used to. However, I still see an antelope almost every time I head into town. After not drawing a tag, I decided to go to another state to find an opportunity to hunt. An antelope hunter who frequents eastern New Mexico recommended that I contact Keith Reily of Way West Outfitters in Hobbs, NM (575-631-4821). Keith offers private land hunts along the eastern slope of New Mexico. The grass and cholla habitat there is perfect for speed goats.”

“My eyes started welling up after I got off the phone with Keith because I was so excited at the prospect of hunting pronghorn. To top it off, he informed me it would be trophy class, and we most likely would have one down by noon on the first day! During the months after booking the hunt, I started practicing shooting at distance. Keith told me to be able to hit accurately out to 350 yards. I chose my .270 Winchester rifle as my lead, and my Remington 700 in 7mm Remington Magnum as my backup. After working up handloads, I set a 10” gong at 350 yards behind our house. I practiced shooting prone and from a tripod until I hit the gong every shot with either rifle.”

“The summer raced by, and before I knew it, I was heading to Moriarty, New Mexico. Unlike deer hunting, the antelope stay in the open all day, so we ate a leisurely breakfast and then headed out. Keith drove us around private ranches to glass for antelope bucks. We saw countless does and a few bucks, but none were trophy-class. Keith jokingly told me his coffee was getting cold, so we needed to get a buck on the ground!”

“As we came over a low hill, we spotted a herd, and in it was a nice buck that Keith recommended I take. I got set up to shoot, but a challenger buck came in as I got set up. The dominant buck charged him, and off they went out of sight! Keith told me not to worry because the buck would come right back to his does. Well, the does didn’t read the same playbook we had, and they moved off without the buck. That’s where Keith’s experience and knowledge of the terrain came into play. Just as Keith predicted, the dominant buck made his way back to the herd, giving me another chance. The rest is in the history books. According to the timestamp on the photos, my buck was down by 11:00am the first day.”



Alan Garbers smiles over his trophy pronghorn. Hunting guide Keith Reily is in the background. Photo courtesy of Alan Garbers.

“My buck scored 75” Boone and Crockett, and I have been enjoying pronghorn biscuits and gravy, as well as antelope tenderloins ever since. I had enough fun, and the trip was priced reasonable enough, that I am urging Dianna to come with me in 2025.”



## Louie Stout Enjoys Late Season Bass Fishing

There is little doubt that HOW Past President Louie Stout loves bass fishing. After all, he is a longtime senior writer for *Bassmaster Magazine* and has been involved in countless Bassmaster Classic tournaments. Oh yes, he was also inducted into the **Bass Fishing Hall of Fame** in 2017 and the **National Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame** in 2005. So he knows a thing or two about fishing – especially bass fishing.

Recently, when Tom Berg, editor of *The Blade*, asked HOW members to send in photos of their successful fall hunting and fishing outings, he received several replies. He was primarily looking for stories and photos about deer hunting, since Indiana's firearms hunting season for deer had just closed. Of course, info and photos about other outdoor pursuits, like fishing, were also very welcome. That prompted Stout to send in the following report and an excellent photo to go with it.

"I'm not a deer hunter," commented Stout, "but I am glad that so many guys in my area are, because it leaves the lakes to me. This photo only shows the bass I could hold for the photo, but I did catch a full limit while fishing alone on a lake just two minutes from my house. Also, it was my last day of fishing before sending my boat to storage. Needless to say, it was a good way to end the year!"

"The biggest bass that day weighed just over four pounds and the total weight of my five-bass limit was 14.80 pounds," he continued. "All of the fish were caught on a chatterbait and swim jig."



Louie Stout holds three largemouth bass from the 5-fish limit he caught from a small lake in southern Michigan. All of the fish released, of course, including those still in the livewell! Photo by Deb Stout.

"I called my wife Deb and asked her to come down to the lake to snap a couple photos before I released them. I definitely don't have those kind of days very often."

## Tom Berg Targets Redhorse Suckers in Indiana and Wisconsin

HOW Executive Director Tom Berg loves searching for different fish species when he is afield, and one of the species he has been targeting recently is redhorse suckers.

The photo at right shows a golden redhorse that Berg caught and released in October from the Red Cedar River in northwest Wisconsin. He also caught a black redhorse and a northern hogsucker (a related species) in Indiana. "I love the diversity of fish species in rivers," he said.





## Brent Wheat Travels Far and Wide for Adventure

Longtime HOW member Brent Wheat is the editor of GUNS Magazine, and as you might expect there are a few “little” perks that go with the job. Read on the find out more.

“The past two months have been a whirlwind of adventure for Your Humble Correspondent,” admitted Wheat, “and I’ll take this brief opportunity to shamelessly brag about it.”

“In mid-November, I was flown to the Czech Republic by Sellier and Bellot Ammunition for a factory tour, sightseeing, and a couple of hunts. S&B were fantastic hosts and we enjoyed a wonderful expedition featuring dozens of kinds of schnitzel. The first night was spent exploring medieval central Prague where I promptly got lost, fell on the wet cobblestones then stumbled into a museum full of huge televisions which had only a single eyeball on each screen. Who says European art isn’t captivating?”

“The next day we enjoyed a stag/fallow deer hunt held at the castle of a bathrobe-wearing Super-Villain, or at least it appeared that way. His modest abode includes a bowling alley, a 5000-square foot trophy room, a casino, an underground spa and – we’re almost certain – a dungeon where English spies were tortured. Actually, despite the picture on the wall of him and Vladimir Putin, he was a genial host and can be forgiven for trying to kill the assembled writers by overfeeding them.”

“Here’s an interesting fact: until this trip, there were only three other documented instances in recorded history of gun writers turning down free food. There was just too much of it.”

“The stag hunt was memorable, except for the fact I only killed a tree. It was a nice oak tree, but they refused to include it in the final tally.”

“Two days later we enjoyed a driven-pheasant hunt. Our group of 10 hunters killed over 1,200 birds (pheasants and other birds) and I, due to poor shotgun mounting technique, bruised the entire right side of my body. I discovered this in the shower and briefly thought I was dying. A quick check of Google assured me I’d live to shoot another day.” The story continues on the next page.



An unbelievable pheasant hunt in the Czech Republic. There may not be this many pheasants in Indiana!



“All-in-all, the Czech Republic is a modern, cosmopolitan country chock-full of spectacular history and the second-largest known strategic reserve of schnitzel. If you’re looking for an English-friendly yet slightly-off-the-beaten path vacation, I highly recommend the Czech Republic, at least before Russia comes calling. Also keep in mind you really need to love rye bread.”

“Two weeks later, I went to Oklahoma courtesy of Benelli, Steiner and Fiocchi. We were supposed to shoot whitetail deer with a 6.5 PRC Benelli Lupo rifle at long distances using a double-secret optical package. However, on the last day I decided to hunt the way *I* know how and managed to bag a nice western OK buck at 30 yards – even though I judged it as merely ‘OK’ by our Hoosier cornfed-standards.”

“And finally, I just returned from a horseback pistol mountain lion hunt in the Skull Valley of Arizona. On this trip I got my PhD in horsie management and was pleased to have only screamed like a small girl a couple of times. We rode over 30 miles – three of which were actually horizontal – in some of the most remote desert in the southwest, amid scenery that looked like it was designed by Walt Disney. We didn’t get a cat because the dry conditions prevented the dogs from picking up a good trail, so I will definitely be back!”

“This is just skimming the cream off the top of a great two months; I’ll make sure to bore you all with more details at the upcoming HOW conference.



Oh yeah, I also got nominated for a ‘Gundy award’. This is apparently a big deal for the YouTube ‘Guntuber’ crowd, but personally, I think it’s all just a big cosmic joke on an old writer. In the immortal words of my hero William T. Sherman: ‘I will not accept if nominated, and will not serve if elected.’ However, if there is a monetary prize, I promise to overcome my principles while cashing the check.”



**Top:** Brent Wheat poses with a nice Oklahoma buck. **Left:** Wheat (left) and his ‘wingman’ Ken Campbell on their recent mountain Lion hunt. **Above:** The scenery in Skull Valley, AZ is spectacular. Photos courtesy of Brent Wheat.



## Bald Eagle Becomes Official Bird of the USA (Finally)

In late December, 50 bills were signed into law, including one in particular that makes the bald eagle the country's official bird. What? You thought the bald eagle was already the official bird of the United States? Nope.

**SB 4610** designates the bald eagle as the national bird, clearing up what has been assumed but not codified for nearly 250 years. The bill, co-sponsored by Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Cynthia Lummis (R-WY), Markwayne Mullen (R-OK), and Tina Smith (D-MN), was passed by the Senate in July and by the House on December 16.

It states “bald eagles are a historical symbol of the United States representing independence, strength, and freedom; the bald eagle is unique to North America; the bald eagle image remains the leading insignia for all branches of the United States military.”

It notes that on June 20, 1782, the bald eagle was adopted as the Coat of Arms for the United States Great Seal but there was never any formal language encoded to officially designate it as the national bird.



## Membership Changes and Member Contact Info

The following name represents our newest HOW member. Please make a note of his contact info:

**Collin Mann:** 4163 E. CR 1300 S, Cloverdale, IN 46120, phone: 317-292-8997,  
Email: [collin.mannst@gmail.com](mailto:collin.mannst@gmail.com)

If your email address, phone number or other contact info changes, please notify HOW Executive Director Tom Berg at [thomas.berg@comcast.net](mailto:thomas.berg@comcast.net) or by mail at 2142 Nondorf Street, Dyer, IN 46311.



## Unusual Nature Photos from the Hoosier Outdoors

### Sponsored by Toyota Motor Sales

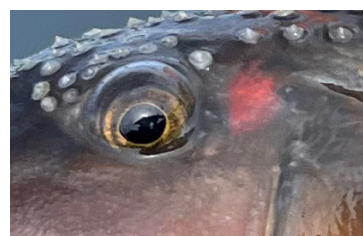
#### The Male Hornyhead Chub Has Distinctive Red Spots on Its Head



Close-up



Original



The “What is it?” photo from the previous issue was similar in difficulty to other recent

quizzes, since it was again correctly identified by a total of seven (7) HOW members. Mike Schoonveld, Phil Cox, Troy McCormick, Jack Spaulding, Mike

Berg, Brandon Butler and Dave Hoffman were all able to identify it. When we drew a name at random for the **Costa Tailfin** sunglasses, Dave Hoffman was the lucky winner. Congrats, Dave! We will have the prize sent to you.

As can be seen in the photo above, the mystery creature for this issue was a Hornyhead Chub (*Nocomis biguttatus*), all decked-out in its spring spawning colors. The hornyhead chub is named for the white tubercles that are present on the heads of breeding males, which look a bit like small horns. The tubercles are shed after the breeding season. Males also have a bright red spot on their heads, right behind each eye. Hornyhead chubs typically grow to 6-9 inches in length, although really large ones can reach 12 inches.

During the spawning season, male chubs build fairly large nests on the stream bottom made of pebbles and small rocks that they gather and put into place with their mouths. They guard their nests from other hornyhead chubs, but they don’t mind if other minnow species use their nests – even at the same time they are using them. After the spring spawn, the rocky nests are abandoned until they are rebuilt next year.

For this issue, our friends at **Toyota Motor Sales** have donated a nice prize for the HOW member who guesses the right answer to this issue’s “What Is It?” question. This time the prize will be a pair of brand new stainless steel Toyota water bottles. See below for more info.



TOYOTA

#### Berg Poses Another Nature Photo “What Is It?” Question

Tom Berg has posed another Nature Photo mystery. The photo shown below right is part of a close-up of a creature that can be found throughout most of the state of Indiana, and you might even see it in your own back yard. Does it look familiar? Have you ever seen this color pattern when spending time outdoors?



This creature may be easy for some people to identify, and harder for others. But we’ll see. Do you know of any creatures that look like this? This time you will have to identify the exact species. If you think it’s a species of mouse, for example, go ahead and guess “Deer Mouse” (of course, it’s not a mouse). If you think you know the answer, send an email to [thomas.berg@comcast.net](mailto:thomas.berg@comcast.net). If you’re right, you’ll be entered in this issue’s prize drawing!



As mentioned, **Toyota** ([www.toyota.com](http://www.toyota.com)) has donated a very nice pair of 25-ounce stainless steel Toyota water bottles for the HOW member who guesses the right answer to this issue’s “What Is It?” nature question. One for you and one for your favorite person! These water bottles are very cool, so put your thinking cap on! If multiple people guess correctly, we’ll draw a winner at random from the pool of correct entries. All photos on this page by Tom Berg.

## 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 media contact for more information.

### St. Croix and Anglers Help Raise Nearly \$40,000 to Support American Heroes

**Park Falls, WI** (November 8, 2024) – Last Veteran’s Day, St. Croix Rod began selling a limited quantity of special-edition Premier Series fishing rods to benefit U.S. Veterans’ advocacy groups [Wounded Warriors in Action](#) and [Take a Vet Fishing](#). The Premier Series was chosen because it’s the best-selling American-made fishing rod. Each of these special-edition Premiers were marked with the Take a Vet Fishing and Wounded Warriors in Action logos.



“Today, thanks to the anglers who purchased these rods, St. Croix is pleased to present checks for over \$19,000 to each of these not-for-profit organizations which work actively, creatively, and tirelessly to provide long-term healing to our nation’s Veterans suffering from both physical and emotional wounds,” says St. Croix Vice President of Marketing, Jesse Simpkins. “Our entire Team at St. Croix is proud to be a long-term partner with both Take a Vet Fishing and Wounded Warriors in Action, and we are grateful to our anglers for stepping up and buying some great fishing rods made even greater by their ability to positively impact the critical work of these two organizations which help so many.”

(continued on next page)



“St. Croix Rod has supported Take a Vet Fishing and our U.S. Veterans from the very onset of our organization in 2014,” says Take a Vet Fishing and Operation Healing Heroes Co-founder, Jay Garstecki. “St. Croix Rod has not just partnered with us to help support Take a Vet Fishing financially, the company has worked to actively grow our membership, reach, and awareness of our mission in a variety of ways – from their communications, to opening their doors to our Veterans for factory tours and giving each of them their own special rod, to most recently donating proceeds from the sale of their limited-edition Premier Veteran’s rods. This donation of nearly \$20,000 will make a dramatic difference by helping us directly pay for actual PTSD treatments for our Veterans and their family members. I can’t tell you how much our organization appreciates the long-term, unbroken, and unwavering support of St. Croix Rod.”

Wounded Warriors in Action Founder and CEO, John McDaniel, remembers meeting St. Croix Rod Co-owner, Paul Schluter, some 17 years ago at a Ruffed Grouse Society banquet in Phillips, Wisconsin – just up the road from Park Falls. “We had a nice dinner and conversation,” McDaniel recalls. “I grew up on a lake in Oshkosh, joined the Army, and traveled and fished around world. I had been a loyal St. Croix angler my entire life but I had never been to the St. Croix factory. I went the very next morning, bought three saltwater rods at the Factory Store, met again with Paul and asked him to sign each one of them. I still use that particular rod I kept for myself, and I’ve never let anyone else touch it!”

That was McDaniel’s first real connection to St. Croix. “The relationship grew from that,” McDaniel says. “When I retired from the Army in ’07, I started bringing my combat-wounded friends to my property near Phillips. It became an annual event with more participants each year. Today we have over 40 events throughout the country, but Wisconsin is still our most important state. The event we host annually in Eagle River is huge, and St. Croix has been donating rods to help support that event and our organization for the past ten years or so,” he says.



**Above:** Take a Vet Fishing veterans pose for a photo after a recent tour of the St. Croix Factory in Park Falls, Wisconsin. **Below Left:** McDaniel (center) poses with WWIA volunteer, Andy Hendrickson (left) and Simpkins (right) with one of the special-edition Premier rods sold to benefit TAVF and WWIA.



“I always appreciated the support from St. Croix, but I was blown away when they told us they were going to build and sell these custom Premier rods and use the money to directly support Wounded Warriors in Action,” McDaniel says. “I am truly humbled and proud. We are going to use all of this money to improve the [Camp Hackett Northwoods Healing Center](#) – our first fully functional ADA-compliant facility near Phillips so we can host even more Veterans and provide them with even better healing experiences in the great outdoors.”

## HOW Supporting Member News

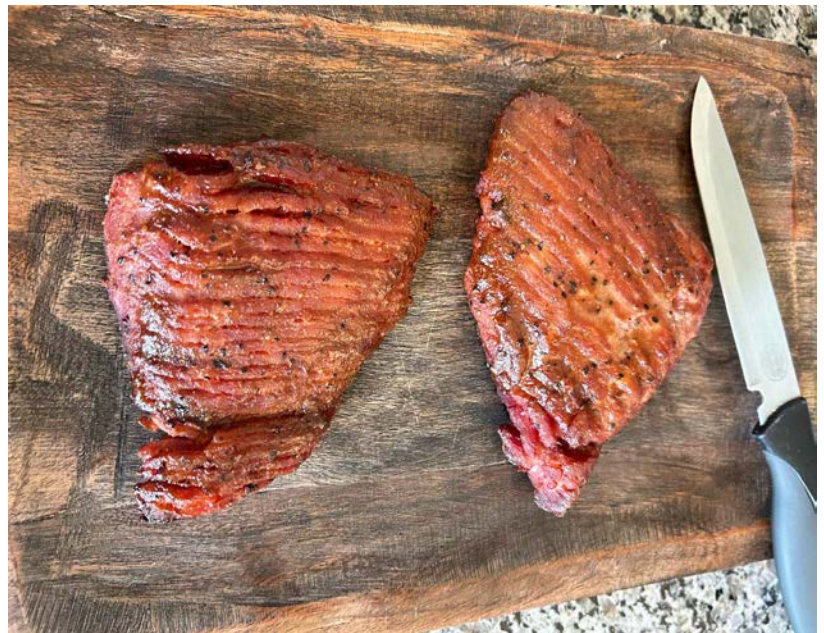
### Dare to Indulge in Delicious and Healthy Stingray With Hi Mountain Seasonings

**Riverton, WY** — Hi Mountain Seasonings, a leading provider of gourmet seasonings and spices, is excited to offer a new mouthwatering recipe that is sure to delight seafood enthusiasts. With its unique flavor and numerous health benefits, stingray is a versatile seafood option that is gaining popularity in many cultures worldwide.

Stingray, known for its flattened body and long whiplike tail, can be found in oceans, rivers, and freshwater habitats worldwide. While it may not be as common a dish in the United States as in other countries, stingray offers a delectable taste akin to crab or lobster. With Hi Mountain Seasonings, preparing a palate-pleasing stingray dish has never been easier.

"Stingray is a hidden gem in the seafood world," said Hans Hummel, owner of Hi Mountain Seasonings. "Not only does it offer a unique flavor profile, but it is also packed with essential nutrients, making it a healthy choice for seafood lovers."

Stingrays are not only delicious, but also low in fat and calories, making them an excellent option for those watching their waistlines. Additionally, they are rich in Omega-3 fatty acids, which have been shown to promote heart health, reduce inflammation, and improve brain function. Recent studies have even suggested that stingrays may possess cancer-fighting properties, further highlighting their potential health benefits.



Hi Mountain Seasonings is proud to offer a delectable stingray recipe that showcases the versatility of this seafood delicacy. Whether grilled, baked, or pan-seared, stingray can be prepared in various ways to suit individual preferences. The recipe, which can be found on the Hi Mountain Seasonings website (and below), provides step-by-step instructions to ensure a perfect dish every time.

"We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to experience the unique flavors of stingray," said Hummel. "Our recipe not only highlights the natural taste of the seafood but also incorporates our premium seasonings to enhance the overall dining experience."

In addition to its exceptional taste, stingray is a great source of essential nutrients, including protein, vitamins, and minerals. Incorporating stingray into one's diet can provide a healthy alternative to traditional seafood options and add variety to any culinary repertoire.

#### Smoked Sting Ray

##### *Ingredients:*

*Hi Mountain Seasoning Wild River Trout Brine*

*Hi Mountain Garlic Pepper Seasoning*

*Ginger seasoning*

*Miso Japanese Barbecue Sauce*



(recipe is continued on the next page)



The first step after killing the stingray is to cut off the wings and skin them out. Then, depending on how much of the ray you plan on cooking at one time, you will need to make enough brine to completely cover the meat. Follow the instructions for mixing the brine that comes with the brine kit. Brine the meat overnight in the refrigerator.

After brining, wash the meat off very well and soak it in a water bath for about 20 minutes. Then rinse off one more time and dry the meat.

Set your smoker or pellet grill to 225 degrees while you season the stingray. Use enough of the garlic, pepper, and ginger seasoning to coat the ray on all sides. Place the seasoned meat in the smoker and cook until the internal temperature reaches 135 degrees. Then, baste the ray meat on all sides with the BBQ sauce, increase the smoker/pellet grill to 325 degrees, and cook until the ray meat hits 145 degrees internal temperature.

Remove from the heat. Place on a cutting board and serve.

So the next time you hook into a ray, indulge yourself and your taste buds in this tantalizing treat. It is delicious and healthy too!

Hi Mountain Seasonings' complete range of products, cooking tips, instructional videos, and recipes can be found at [www.himtnjerky.com](http://www.himtnjerky.com). Their products are available at high-end sporting goods stores, farm-and-ranch stores, and many local grocery stores.

**About Hi Mountain Seasonings:** Located in the heart of Wyoming, Hi Mountain Seasonings was founded in 1991 and is America's premier manufacturer of homemade jerky and sausage kits. Hi Mountain Seasonings has successfully captured distinct, traditional Western flavors in its jerky cure & seasonings, Western-style seasonings, bacon cures, snackin' stick kits, dressings & dips, and much, much more. The company also offers field dressing and prep and cooking tools. For additional information, write: Hi Mountain Seasonings, 1000 College View Drive, Riverton, WY 82501; call toll-free 1-800-829-2285; or visit the company website at [www.himtnjerky.com](http://www.himtnjerky.com).

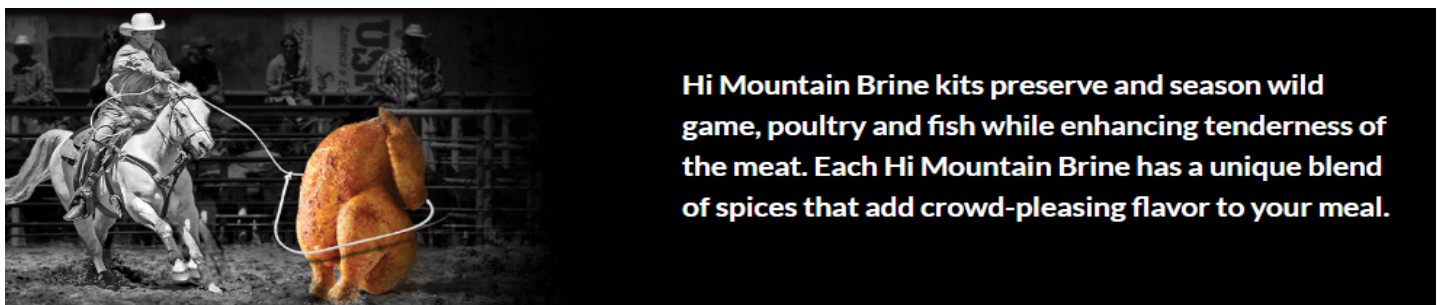
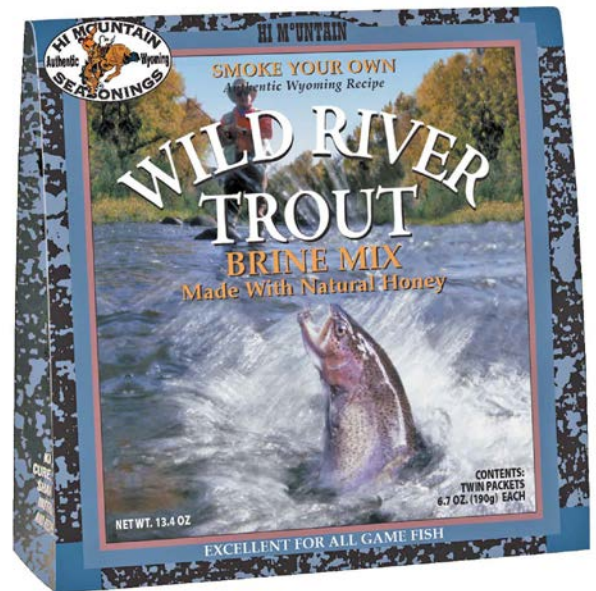
**Media Contact:** For more information, please contact:

Karen Lutto Leatherwood

804-539-6699 (cell)

[karen@hunteroc.com](mailto:karen@hunteroc.com)

HOC Website: [www.hunteroc.com](http://www.hunteroc.com)



# HOW's Supporting Member Websites

Al's Goldfish Company - [www.alsgoldfish.com](http://www.alsgoldfish.com)  
Alps Brands - [www.alpsbrands.com](http://www.alpsbrands.com)  
Archery Trade Association - [www.archerytrade.org](http://www.archerytrade.org)  
B'n'M Pole Company - [www.bnmpoles.com](http://www.bnmpoles.com)  
Black River Tools - [www.blackrivertools.com](http://www.blackrivertools.com)  
BoatUS - [www.boatus.com](http://www.boatus.com)  
BOLT Locks - [www.boltlock.com](http://www.boltlock.com)  
Bow Spider - [www.bowspider.com](http://www.bowspider.com)  
BPI Outdoors - [www.BPIguns.com](http://www.BPIguns.com)  
Cauldryn - [www.cauldryn.com](http://www.cauldryn.com)  
Church Tackle Company - [www.churchtackle.com](http://www.churchtackle.com)  
Cocoons Eyewear - [www.cocoons.com](http://www.cocoons.com)  
Costa - [www.costadelmar.com](http://www.costadelmar.com)  
Daisy Outdoor Products - [www.daisy.com](http://www.daisy.com)  
Danner Boots - [www.danner.com](http://www.danner.com)  
Dardevle by Eppinger - [www.dardevle.com](http://www.dardevle.com)  
Ducks Unlimited - [www.ducks.org](http://www.ducks.org)  
Egret Baits - [www.egretbaits.com](http://www.egretbaits.com)  
Falcon Guides - [www.falconguides.com](http://www.falconguides.com)  
Finn Tackle Company - [www.finnspoons.com](http://www.finnspoons.com)  
Flying Fisherman - [www.flyingfisherman.com](http://www.flyingfisherman.com)  
Gapen Company - [www.gapen.com](http://www.gapen.com)  
Hawke Sport Optics - [www.hawkeoptics.com](http://www.hawkeoptics.com)  
Henry Repeating Arms Co. - [www.henryUSA.com](http://www.henryUSA.com)  
HHA Sports - [www.HHAsports.com](http://www.HHAsports.com)  
Hi Mountain Seasonings - [www.himtnjerky.com](http://www.himtnjerky.com)  
Hornady Manufacturing - [www.hornady.com](http://www.hornady.com)  
Indiana Destination Development Corporation - [www.visitindiana.com](http://www.visitindiana.com)  
Kehrer Fish Company - [www.kehrerfishcompany.com](http://www.kehrerfishcompany.com)  
L&S Bait Company - [www.shopmirrolure.com](http://www.shopmirrolure.com)  
LaCrosse Footwear - [www.lacrossefootwear.com](http://www.lacrossefootwear.com)  
LensPen - [www.lenspen.com](http://www.lenspen.com)  
Li'L Tuffy Swim-bait - [www.ramblingangler.com](http://www.ramblingangler.com)  
Mack's Lure - [www.mackslure.com](http://www.mackslure.com)  
MEC Outdoors - [www.mecoutdoors.com](http://www.mecoutdoors.com)  
Mepps by Sheldons', Inc - [www.mepps.com](http://www.mepps.com)  
Mister Twister - [www.mistertwister.com](http://www.mistertwister.com)  
Mongo Attachments - [www.mongoattachments.com](http://www.mongoattachments.com)  
Nat'l Shooting Sports Foundation - [www.nssf.org](http://www.nssf.org)  
National Wild Turkey Federation - [www.nwtf.org](http://www.nwtf.org)  
Nesco Vacuum Sealers - [www.nesco.com](http://www.nesco.com)  
Norsemens Outdoors - [www.norsemensoutdoors.com](http://www.norsemensoutdoors.com)  
Nosler - [www.nosler.com](http://www.nosler.com)  
Nothead Tackle - [www.notheadtackle.com](http://www.notheadtackle.com)  
O.F. Mossberg & Sons, Inc. - [www.mossberg.com](http://www.mossberg.com)  
Old Salt Angling - [www.oldsaltangling.com](http://www.oldsaltangling.com)  
Otis Technology - [www.otistec.com](http://www.otistec.com)  
Outdoor Edge - [www.outdooredge.com](http://www.outdooredge.com)  
Pheasants Forever - [www.pheasantsforever.org](http://www.pheasantsforever.org)  
Pro-Cure Bait Scents - [www.pro-cure.com](http://www.pro-cure.com)  
Rapala VMC - [www.rapala.com](http://www.rapala.com)  
Renfro Productions - [www.renfroproductions.com](http://www.renfroproductions.com)  
Seaguar Fishing Lines - [www.seaguar.com](http://www.seaguar.com)  
Shipshewana/LaGrange County CVB - [www.visitshipshewana.org](http://www.visitshipshewana.org)  
Shooter's Choice - [www.shooters-choice.com](http://www.shooters-choice.com)  
SKRE Gear - [www.skregear.com](http://www.skregear.com)  
Smith's Products - [www.smithsproducts.com](http://www.smithsproducts.com)  
Speedhook Specialists - [www.speedhook.com](http://www.speedhook.com)  
Sporting Classics - [www.sportingclassics.com](http://www.sportingclassics.com)  
Spypoint Trail Cameras - [www.spypoint.com](http://www.spypoint.com)  
St. Croix Rods - [www.stcroixrods.com](http://www.stcroixrods.com)  
Sturm, Ruger & Co. - [www.ruger.com](http://www.ruger.com)  
Swab-Its - [www.swab-its.com](http://www.swab-its.com)  
Sweet Owen CVB - [www.sweetowencvb.org](http://www.sweetowencvb.org)  
Tales End Tackle - [www.talesendtackle.com](http://www.talesendtackle.com)  
Target Communications Outdoor Books - [www.targetcommbooks.com](http://www.targetcommbooks.com)  
Toyota Motor Sales - [www.toyotanewsroom.com](http://www.toyotanewsroom.com)  
Traditions Media - [www.traditionsmedia.com](http://www.traditionsmedia.com)  
Traveler's Guide to Firearms Laws of 50 States - [www.bookvalueusa.com](http://www.bookvalueusa.com)  
TTI-Blakemore Fishing - [www.ttiblakemore.com](http://www.ttiblakemore.com)  
Van Vuuren African Safaris - [www.vvasafaris.com](http://www.vvasafaris.com)  
Vexilar, Inc. - [www.vexilar.com](http://www.vexilar.com)  
Vortex Optics - [www.vortexoptics.com](http://www.vortexoptics.com)  
Whitetails Unlimited - [www.whitetailsunlimited.com](http://www.whitetailsunlimited.com)  
WildTech - [www.wildtechgear.com](http://www.wildtechgear.com)  
Winchester Ammunition - [www.winchester.com](http://www.winchester.com)  
W.R. Case - [www.wrcase.com](http://www.wrcase.com)  
Yakima Bait Company - [www.yakimabait.com](http://www.yakimabait.com)  
Z-Man Fishing - [www.zmanfishing.com](http://www.zmanfishing.com)

HOW members are encouraged to check these websites for general info and answers to product and service questions.



# 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	_____ Radio	_____ Artist
_____ Books	_____ Photography	_____ Lectures	
_____ Television	_____ Teaching	_____ Trade Journals	
_____ Blog/Online Work	_____ 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 media 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 ensure 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 conference.

## 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, internet/online, 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; 20 online



articles, blogs, vlogs or podcasts 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; nature lovers; sportsmen; outdoorsmen; public employees in outdoor fields; educators teaching related subjects; fishing guides and tournament anglers, 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, service providers, 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 fishing, hunting, boating, hiking, nature, ecology, or in preserving the environment in general.



# Calendar of Events

## **2025 ATA Show:**

([www.archerytrade.org](http://www.archerytrade.org))

Indianapolis, IN

January 8-10, 2025

## **SHOT Show 2025:**

(<http://shotshow.org>)

Las Vegas, NV

January 21-24, 2025

## **Ford Indianapolis Boat, Sport & Travel Show:**

([www.IndySportShow.com](http://www.IndySportShow.com))

Indianapolis, IN

February 14-16 & 19-23, 2025

## **Indiana Deer, Turkey & Waterfowl Expo:**

([www.IndySportShow.com](http://www.IndySportShow.com))

Indianapolis, IN

February 21-23, 2025

## **HOW 2025 Annual Conference:**

([www.HoosierOutdoorWriters.org](http://www.HoosierOutdoorWriters.org))

Clifty Inn, Clifty Falls State Park

Madison, IN

April 4-6, 2025

(Annual meeting on April 5)

## **NRA 2025 Annual Meeting and Exhibits:**

([www.nraam.org](http://www.nraam.org))

Atlanta, GA

April 24-27, 2025

## **POMA 2025 Conference:**

([www.professionalloutdoormedia.org](http://www.professionalloutdoormedia.org))

Toledo, OH

June 23-25, 2025

HOW members may submit upcoming events, along with dates, locations and other details to the newsletter editor at: [director@hoosieroutdoorwriters.org](mailto:director@hoosieroutdoorwriters.org) for possible inclusion in future issues of *The Blade*.