



Newsletter of The North American School of Outdoor Writing

March 15 2006
Salt Spring Island, British Columbia,

Featured Writers Group: Outdoor Writers Association of California.

...A dusting of snow on the daffodils this morning...the deer and the horses are as shaggy as an old sofa...

Can you imagine how much thought went into the opening sentence of
the latest (#6) Harry Potter Book--Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince?

Days? Weeks? Months? Years?

Here's the opening line: **"It was nearing midnight and the Prime Minister was sitting alone in his office, reading a long memo that was slipping through his brain without leaving the slightest trace of meaning behind."**

To me, the word order is not quite right, perhaps because this was not written by North Americano, so the emphasis is a bit different.

I would change it so the last part reads: "...reading a long memo that was slipping through his brain without leaving **behind** the slightest trace of meaning."

What would you do?

Thank you to everyone who replied to the request for brown bear photos I forwarded for The Sportsman Channel editor Michelle Scheuermann. I forward Michelle's requests periodically and, so far, they have resulted in both article opportunities and the sale of photos. To anyone who did not get a reply to their submission, I tried to notify everyone when Michelle had made her selection, and I thank you now.

One very useful contact resulted in the brown bear photo request.

Anyone who ever needs wildlife photos should add this URL to their FAVORITES list.

Hello Roger/Michell:

I have provided you a link to our Brown Bears in the FWS Image Library. If you see one that you can use, just click on the image and download to your computer. If you have problems do not hesitate to call me. **All of our images are public domain so there is no fee for these images nor do you have to submit a release form for our signature.**

<http://images.fws.gov/default.cfm?CFID=520490&CFTOKEN=46239169>

Good Luck with your project.

LaVonda Walton

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

FWS Image Library

4501 N. Fairfax Drive, Room 3106

Arlington, Va. 22203

(703) 358-2144

Newsletter readers will recall that I circulated a web address that can be used to see if

anyone is illegally using text and images from your web site and/or articles.

Go to (www.copyscape.com).

Here's a similar site for anyone producing outdoor art. Apparently in China the illegal reproduction of artwork is a growth industry.

Go to www.painterskeys.com/clickbacks/chinese-list.asp

Let me know what you find.

Please welcome new students Gary Myers here on Salt Spring Island and

Dee-dee Bob, in Holbrokk, Arizona. I look forward to working with both these students and getting to know them through their writing.

Congratulations to Tony Seals in Lexington, Ohio. Tony just received his Graduation Certificate. Tony writes:

Roger:

I have written well over a dozen articles for Midwest Outdoors along with one major feature for Game & Fish Magazine. I also have two more articles in the works for Game & Fish and have recently got the green light to write an article for F-F-G (on spec). The income from these articles will put me well over the cost of your school in earnings during the year that it took to complete your course...

Way to go, Tony...an excellent success story.

Congratulations to Graduate Student Karyn White who has been accepted for membership in Outdoor Writers of America. Her smiling face graces the pages of the latest OWAA newsletter. Smart move, Karyn.

Karyn also sent along a note on something I have never encountered before in my 30-or-more years of freelancing. Karyn sold a piece to a magazine specializing in the paranormal. Upon acceptance, the magazine sent her a form asking her to verify that her story was true, and asked her to have it notarized, which the magazine pays for.

That's new to me!

Has anyone ever heard of a TOQUE being called a TOBOGGAN? The snug wool caps we wear here in winter are always called a TOQUE, but I heard reference to one as a TOBOGGAN—can anyone shed any light? Rich Creason in Indiana writes: "First, I have never heard the word TOQUE, much less know what it means. The winter hat you refer to is often called a toboggan in Indiana, but usually, it is just called a "stocking hat".

In the last week-or-so I have received copies of some of the Canadian magazines I subscribe to. There is work by graduate students in every one. They are as follows: Saskatchewan graduate Gene Unruh has an archery article in both *Outdoor Edge* and *Western Sportsman* magazines—archery is Gene's specialty. Also in *Western Sportsman*, B.C. graduate Ryan Stuart has a B.C. Reports item. Edmonton graduate Fred Noddin has a piece in *Outdoor Edge* too, as well as an article in *Alberta Outdoorsman*. Also in *Alberta Outdoorsman* is Grande Prairie graduate Brian Bildson's regular trapping column. Brian also tells me he has a feature in this latest issue of *Fur Fish Game*. In *Ontario Out of Doors*, graduate Tim Allard has a lovely feature on the Ottawa River and graduate Don Sangster is quoted as an expert angler in a fishing feature, complete with photo.

And even I still get the occasional piece published. I have a nice Reports piece in this issue of *Outdoor Canada* magazine, one of my favorite markets.

Inevitable as they are, we all hope to receive rejection letters that we can learn

from. Here's one received by New Mexico student Scott Frost from the editor of the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association's publication. When an editor takes the time to write a letter like this, it's almost as good as an

acceptance letter—almost.

Dear Scott:

Many thanks for the chance to consider your manuscript entitled "Black Powder Blues." Regrettably, it's not a story we would use in the foreseeable future, and I am returning it to you so you can market it elsewhere. I enjoyed the story—especially the *Apostle's bag* and the lucky street musician in Argentina...

The story has charm and good humor, but we need to use the limited space we have in our magazine for how-to, nuts-and-bolts, and historical articles. Furthermore, many of our readers have had experiences similar to yours and don't feel they need to read about someone else's duplicate experience, or else it's been so long since they committed their blunders that they feel superior enough to resent the use of space on something that's not educational to them...we publish very little humor.

I should also point out that I enjoyed the story about your dynamite adventures. Sometimes I think many of us (myself included) are lucky we made it to adulthood.

Now, even though we can't use this piece, I hope you'll market it elsewhere—e.g., another magazine that's not quite so specialized as we are, or subscribed to by so many expert! I suspect *Backwoodsmen* would be a good place to check.

I truly appreciate your sending us the manuscript and wish you every success in placing it in another publication.

Best wish

The Editor

What made this rejection, as nice as it was, a little easier to bear was this e-mail I received from Scott shortly after:

Roger:

I have received not one, but TWO assignments from recent queries!

One, from a national archery publication, reads: "...Your article idea titled "I didn't draw a tag. What do I do now?" sounds excellent to me. How's an April 1 deadline? Please include any high-quality photos you might have that pertain to the article.

The other from a magazine in Colorado reads:

Our next issue closes today so why don't we think about a piece for the April issue (deadline March 17). Theme for the issue is "Stream Trout Special" so I'll be looking for strong where-to-go trout stories...have some ideas? Let's try something smallish, like 300 words, to get started, if you're up to it...

On the subject of how some magazines treat their writers, Scott sent along this note too:

Hey Roger:

Check this out. A hunting journal I had queried says that manuscripts are welcomed, but none will be returned unless published. They reserve the right to publish anything you send them without any further approval or agreement from the author or sender. Digital photos only. They reserve full right to edit. Sending in manuscripts constitutes guaranteeing originality, truthfulness and no infringement of others rights. It makes no mention of payment. I think I will pass on them, thanks just the same.

Scott

Scott—now that's getting smart—if you see something you don't like, stay away from it...there are plenty of fish in the sea—you don't need to court a smelly one.

A graduate student asked for advice after not being paid by a publication—he wrote:

Roger:

I could use a little advice. This may be a little long winded so forgive the story teller in me. Unfortunately this is no tall tale.

As you know I have a regular column with XXXXXXXXXXXX magazine and I have written several feature stories and taken on assignments at the request of the editor.

All told I have written seven columns, and five stories. Of those I have received payment for only the very first two columns. At the request of the editor I include an invoice for each piece or pieces when I send them in.

I have contacted the editor several times about getting paid the outstanding amount. First it was a computer issue, I re-sent the invoice. A couple months later still nothing. I contacted the editor again. This time the publisher had a very sick relative that came close to dying. I re-sent the invoice. A couple months later.... still nothing. I sent an e-mail asking again to paid.

The reply I got said the magazine had changed website servers and that process had erased all backdated emails. That meant the editor no longer had the

e-mails that were used as reference to what I have and have not been paid.

The editor wants me to send the invoices that are outstanding.

THEN THE BIGGEST SURPRISE OF ALL--

The editor asks, while this situation is being rectified, do I want to take on any more assignments?

AMAZING!

Is it time for me to call a lawyer? I do have other stories, which I was submitting to this magazine, but I have held off sending them.

Any advice would be appreciated.

My advice to this student applies to all freelancers—try not to get in so deep before getting payment issues resolved. I realize most writers are loathe to jeopardize their relationship with any editor by discussing money-matters, and I know that deadlines may require you to submit two or three articles before an invoice is seriously overdue, but if you feel your payment is late don't be afraid to address this issue and get it resolved. Any editor worth a pinch of salt will help you get paid ASAP. Any editor who won't is not worth writing for, and it's far better to find that out as soon as possible, rather than trying to collect a lot of unpaid invoices.

Realize, too, that it may not be the EDITOR'S fault you are not being paid—the problem could well be elsewhere in the organization.

Another thing to keep in mind is that often writers' organizations (like OWAA) will intervene on your behalf to help you get paid should you feel you are being "hung out to dry."

Later, I DID receive a note from this graduate saying they finally did get paid—the bottom line is to always conduct your self as a professional...it's a lot easier than having to eat crow if you "loose it."

Readers of this newsletter will know I am a great proponent of belonging to as many writers' groups as you can. Rich Creason in Anderson, Indiana sent along this note that demonstrates he believes in it too:

Hi Roger!

I returned from the campus of Notre Dame in Indiana a couple weeks ago. We had our Association of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers Board of Directors meeting there. Tomorrow, we have our annual Hoosier Outdoor Writers meeting in Indianapolis. After thinking it over, I may decide to join the Canadian Outdoor Writers. Perhaps there

will be a conference in Ontario (or Quebec or Manitoba) in the near future that I can attend of at least meet some Canadian writers on my trips up north. Good contacts are always priceless.

Besides AGLOW, OWAA, and HOW, I also joined Southeast Outdoor Press Association (SEOPA) last year and will be attending their October conference in North Alabama (a great area to visit!) this year. Our AGLOW 2006 conference will be in Sioux Falls, South Dakota in September. **(If any of your Canadian writers are interested in joining our organization, have them contact me.)** Last night, we wrapped up our 7th annual banquet for the East Central Indiana Chapter of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (I'm a life member). I have been Chapter Chairman for the last three years and while putting on an event like this is a tremendous amount of work, we cleared over \$8,800 for the benefit of elk, other wildlife, and their habitat.

Not bad for a small chapter in a state with no elk!

Waiting for spring.

Rich.

EYEWRITE4U@aol.com

Featured Writers Group—Outdoor Writers of California

Dear Roger,

I've been reading your enjoyable e-mails regarding outdoor and travel writing. They are very informative and valuable. Thank you.

I saw a mention of one of the outdoor writers groups and would like to inform your readers about the

Outdoor Writers Association of California (OWAC).

I happen to be the Executive Secretary of the organization and believe it is one of the best clubs of its type in the West.

Your readers can find out more about OWAC by going to our web site at:

<http://www.owac.org>

We hold two conferences each year in different locations, generally in California, both north and south. Our annual dues are only \$35 for members.

Again, thank you for your newsletter.

Shirley [Miller—shirleymiller1@comcast.net](mailto:shirleymiller1@comcast.net)

Outdoor Writers Association of California , 1120 Forest Ave. #250, Pacific Grove, CA 93950 • 1-877-595-8330

The Outdoor Writers Association of California (OWAC) provides members two major conferences a year; a quarterly newsletter with tips, tools and editorial leads; a membership press card, directory, and Web site listing;

and opportunities to network with top outdoor journalists, photographers and supporting members. If you are involved in spreading the word about the outdoors and/or travel opportunities as a writer, book author, photographer, radio and/or television broadcaster, Web editor/writer, or as a public speaker, OWAC is **the** organization to join to share with others your appreciation and enthusiasm for outdoor recreation.

OWAC offers two [three-day conferences](#) each year in the spring and fall. Local visitors bureaus and chambers of commerce host the conferences in such premier locations as Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks, Lake Tahoe, Monterey/Carmel, Catalina Island, Mt. Shasta, Humboldt-Redwoods Coast, Sonoma Wine Country, and more. They provide a wide variety of local activities to help outdoor communicators to experience fully the virtues of the region while gathering story material. Craft improvement sessions, newsmaker briefings, and networking opportunities all add up to valuable professional experiences in a fun environment.

Founded in 1986, OWAC is a non-profit organization of professional outdoor communicators from California and surrounding western states. We work closely with our supporting members - businesses and tourism professionals in outdoor industries across the country.

The organization began with a strong core of avid anglers and hunters and has grown to include those who communicate about boating, camping, hiking, wildlife, biking, travel and other outdoor activities.

OWAC now consists of newspaper and magazine staffers, freelance writers, book authors, radio broadcasters, video producers, editors, photographers, artists, lecturers and information officers. Together, OWAC communicators reach an audience of nearly 20 million readers, listeners and viewers in the largest outdoor market in America.

With annual dues of only \$35 for members, OWAC membership is a valuable investment.

Outdoor Shows

I am also a great proponent of attending Sportsman Shows and Boat Shows. Here are two student's comments on where that can lead:

Student Charles Smick in Paducah Kentucky (who has written on this issue before) says:

Roger:

I went to the Rockford Boat Show, here in Rockford, IL. I met the Advertising Manager for Mid-West Outdoors. We had a talk about how to get articles published easier, and some other opportunities to promote their sponsors and get published regularly. They want to expand into Tennessee too, so there is an opportunity there.

The Ad Manager said if I could arrange for a guest host deal in Kentucky for the

Mid-West Outdoors TV Show, **I could CO-HOST the show!** What a GREAT potential opportunity!!! I know several possible hosts that I could contact.

Keep in touch.

Chuck

And this from Graduate student Peter Wood in Cambridge, Ontario:

[Hi Roger; It was a really productive fishing show in Toronto; hundreds of displays and all-day fishing seminars every hour, with lots of new products. I attended the show on Friday & Saturday and kept busy with interviews, shopping, browsing, chatting with writers at the Outdoor Writers of Canada booth and Ontario Out Of Doors magazine booth.](#)

[The Outdoor Writers of Canada conference held in conjunction with the Spring Fishing show \(an annual event and again sponsored by Ontario Out Of Doors magazine\) went very well. Executive Director Bill Thompson, as usual,](#)

wore different hats as he worked his way through the agenda and introduced guest speakers from the Canadian Sport Fishing Industry, MNR , World Fishing Network, and Shimano .

Two new students of NASOW attended the afternoon rendezvous but left before I could chat with them . As well there were four NASOW graduates! During last year's event one of the guest speakers topics enabled me to get an article published in Michigan Out Of Doors Magazine. This years guest speaker topics has inspired me to email out a few queries.

I'm looking forward to the 2006 Edmonton OWC conference in June; already have my vacations booked.

Peter Wood, Ripple Journalism & Images, www.gofishin.ca

More Outdoor Writers Opportunities

Outdoor Writers of Canada meet in Edmonton this weekend

Plans are underway **for a regional outdoor writers meeting to be held in conjunction with the Edmonton Boat and Sportsman Show on Saturday March 18, 2006.** Canadian National Sportsman Shows (CNSS) has once again offered to host our event. They will provide meeting space and lunch for attendees. The meeting will start at noon and tickets will be provided by CNSS to get into the big show and attend the meeting. Please let us know if you are planning to attend and we will ensure you get tickets and that there will be enough lunch for everyone.

CNSS has been supporting Outdoor Writers of Canada (OWC) in Alberta for many years. They work with communicators to provide information on their big events and host annual, regional meetings to allow us to develop our craft. For more information on the shows themselves or to receive press releases on the events please contact Jackie Jackson, Show Publicist - (403) 252-8338 or 813-5029 Fax: (403) 253-4136 info@litcorp.com or check out their web site at www.sportshows.ca.

CNSS has continued to expand their Sportsman Shows in both Calgary and Edmonton. The meeting will provide a chance to network with other communicators in the outdoor field. This is a great opportunity to introduce inspiring communicators to OWC. We are working on an agenda to include presentations and craft improvement sessions that will provide benefits and information to all attendees.

Information on the upcoming annual OWC conference, June 7 to 11, 2006, in Edmonton will be shared. The annual conference is shaping up to be a big event with lots of offer delegates. Check out the conference information in this issue of Inside Outdoors and register early for the event. We have a tremendous organizing committee and strong partnerships with Edmonton Tourism, Travel Alberta and OWC corporate members. It will be an event you don't want to miss!

If you are planning on attending the regional meeting please notify Brad Fenson at (780) 450-3970 or email bfenson@shaw.ca and tickets will be set aside for you at the Show Office and we will make sure there is enough lunch for everyone.

Northwest Outdoor Writers meet in Montana April 28-30 2006

For the first time, with the help of Carol Edgar and Doug Wilson NOWA will have its first photo shoot. The shoot will be limited to eight photographers who will be competing for prizes, the catch is that the shoot is on Wednesday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. which may allow any photographers on the board to participate. To maintain a level playing field I will email the information to all of you. The first eight to sign up get to do the photo shoot.. The information will be sent no later than Friday March 10.

The Board meeting begins Wed at 7:00 p.m. and continues again at 8: 00 a.m on Thursday morning and will be finished by noon.

Thursday afternoon has been set aside for a real cowboy shoot with lots of action using rifles, shotguns and revolvers.

Thursday evening is the annual wine tasting. Bring a bottle of wine from your local winery.

Friday is supporting member and skills day.

Saturday is chalk full of interesting workshops, followed by the silent auction banquet and awards. This year Remington Arms has generously donated an over and under shotgun for the silent auction.

Sunday will have the General meeting and raffle.

More details will be in the newsletter coming out shortly.

Meanwhile phone the hotel and make your reservations, send in your registration and prepare yourself for some good old Montana hospitality and a great time.

See you there.

Ron Kerr, Executive Director
Northwest Outdoor Writers Assoc.
PO Box 310
Kimberley, BC

V1A 2Y9
phone: 250-432-0002; fax 250-432-0012
email: nowa@shaw.ca

Outdoor Writers invited to Hawaii

NORTHWEST OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION MEMBERS INVITED TO VISIT KAUAI IN MAY

The Kauai Visitors Bureau (KVB) has invited a select group of NOWA members to visit Kauai, May 15-20, 2006. Ten travel writers and two photographers will be selected to participate. While a story assignment is not required, participants should be confident they will be able to sell a Kauai feature story to a major national publication.

KVB will provide complimentary roundtrip coach airfare to Kauai from major gateway cities (Burbank, Denver, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Oakland, Phoenix, Portland (OR), Sacramento, Salt Lake City, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Ana, Seattle). Tickets will not be open-ended. However, KVB is more than happy to book any requested Kauai departure date (as long as it is not cost prohibitive).

KVB will also provide ground transportation, accommodations, scheduled food and beverage functions and select optional activities.

All NOWA members interested in attending the press trip may contact Emele Freiberg at McNeil Wilson Communications no later than March 15 at:

Emele Freiberg
Senior Account Executive, Travel & Tourism
McNeil Wilson Communications, Inc.
phone (808) 539-3440
emele@mcneilwilson.com

In the last few issues of the newsletter, my examples of Good Writing have read more like BRUNTS ON PARADE. First I featured my son, Richard van Camp and his best selling book, Lesser Blessed. Then I featured by father, Richard Brunt, and an excerpt from a story he published about Mr. Five, a pet muskrat I kept as a kid. In this issue, I feature a short story written by my brother, Doug. He is an author, video producer, editor and writer of some fame. This is a story he wrote after one of our sessions together at our favorite pub. The "YOUR BROTHER" he refers to in the first line is me...

Me 'n' Rog
by
Doug Brunt

Your brother, who just turned 49 if you can imagine that, has been to the ophthalmologist again. His right eye works not-so-well no more, he says. He tells the doctor that if he covers up his good eye and stares at a STOP sign with his not-so-good eye there's a hole in his vision. He says, "It's like the 'O' is missing and the 'P' kinda leans over to fill the gap."

"Hmmm," says the ophthalmologist.

And you say, "How come you'd want to cover up your good eye at a STOP sign?"

And to that he doesn't seem to have an answer 'cause he just looks across the table at you. With both eyes. And he explains how the ophthalmologist allows as how he's got a tear in his ret'na or co'nea or something.

And now it's your turn to say, "hmmm."

And then you wonder to him, "Do you think it's from the time when the end of your slingshot broke off at full draw and the end-bit sprung back and thwacked you a good one?"

And now it's your brother's turn to say, "hmmm."

"Or maybe," you go on, "it's from the time you and John Henderson was huckin' them big home-made, foot-long darts back and forth across the backyard and John says 'heads-up' and you, like a dummy, do 'heads-up' and for your trouble get stabbed in the eye with a two-inch spike?"

And your brother considers this for a minute then rubs at the little pock mark on the right side of his nose that looks like the scar left behind from a really bad zit and he says again, "Hmmm." Then he adds, "The dart never got me in the eye. I was lucky."

"Hmmm," you say and nod a time or two. Then after a long pause you say, "We was always hurtin' ourselves when we was kids."

"I know it," he says.

And you look at his almost-50-year-old hands that show the stitchin' and patchin' like a pair of old jeans and you say, "Remember when you came home from buckin' bales for old man Savage all bandaged to hell 'cause the wagon tongue fell on you and damn near took your hand off."

"Hmmm," he says.

"And you remember when that squirrel that you thought was your pet almost bit clean through your finger?"

"Hmmm," he says.

"And what about how you gave yourself a hernia from draggin' that goddammed duck punt cross them fields out back so's you could tend your trapline."

And he says, "hmmm," again.

And he's quiet for a long time then asks if you remember the time he whacked you in the head with the double-bladed axe when you was leanin' over his shoulder while he was cuttin' kindling.

And you say, "hmmm," and finger your eyebrow where the hair still doesn't grow these forty years later.

Then you tell him about when you was trying to get into your locker at school and the goddammed lock wouldn't open so you dialed the combination for a second time and yanked the sucker then dialed it a third time and yanked again and still it wouldn't open so really pissed off, you dialed one last time and yanked with everything you had and this time the goddammed thing opened and the hooky bit at the end of the lock caught your finger and ripped a chunk of meat out so big you could see all the way down to the bone and how you puked right there in the hall and he says, "hmmm."

Then you tell about when you was cutting up frozen bacon with a meat cleaver and you got to thinking that if a guy wasn't careful he could really hurt himself with one of them cleavers when 'whack' you dammed near lopped off your whole finger.

And about the time when your dogs was fightin' and you got between them, which cost you a handful of stitches and a tetanus shot.

Then you tell him 'bout when you and your little sister was playin' at the construction site of the new elementary school. And how she was standing on one side of this two-foot deep, twenty-foot wide mud puddle and you was on 'tother. And how you figured it'd be funny if you lobbed this big boulder towards her so's she'd get soaked and all. But you heaved it just a bit too hard and instead of landing in the muddy water at her feet it hit her whump, square in the chest. And how you ran all the way home scared to death 'cause you thought sure as hell you'd get a lickin' for killin' your sister.

And he says, "hmmm."

And you wonder how much of this he's heard 'cause his hearing's shot from all them years working in the mines and yours ain't so good neither 'cause of all them years playin' in a rock band.

Then finally he says, "Ya, we sure did get hurt when we was kids."

And he gets real quiet and so do you and you wonder if he's thinking about more hurts and scars and he looks at you across the table with his good eye and his not-so-good one and he says, "Poor old Dad."

And you say, "hmhhh," wishin that the old bugger had lived long enough to sit with the two of ya and shoot the breeze like this now that you're growed up men .

Roger Brunt rbrunt@saltspring.com

The North American School of Outdoor Writing

www.linksnorth.com/outdoorwriting