

with public approval while poor cases always bring criticism to both the officer and the department. He should work toward convincing the public that his job is not only to arrest violators, but to promote wild-life conservation as well. To prevent a violation is far better than to allow it to happen just for the sake of making a case. Also, laws and regulations should be carefully checked and rechecked for accuracy so that the public will understand thoroughly, and be able to rely on the contents.

Wildlife conservation is a big business in our state with its very existence depending on the people. Therefore a large responsibility is placed in the hands of those who control this organization. Every effort must be made to maintain and operate this business so that the stockholders will receive the best possible service and the best recreational facilities that their dollars can obtain. The potentials are great, the demands are many, but with all departmental segments working together as a unit these achievements can be accomplished.

WHAT OWAA MEMBERS CAN DO FOR THE INFORMATION AND EDUCATION SPECIALISTS

BY HURLEY CAMPBELL
Now President OWAA

Thank you, it's a pleasure to be here with you.

Let me say at the onset, however, that any resemblance between what I say in the next few minutes and the title of my talk as outlined in your program will be purely coincidental.

You see, when Steve Harmon called to ask me to be on the program he told me I could talk about the Outdoor Writers Association of America, about outdoor writers and the I & E section of the state's game and fish commission, about Southern Outdoors—just about anything, really.

I must confess it shocked me when, just a few days ago, I received this copy of the program listing my few moments of chatting with you under so impressive a title as "What OWAA Can Do For The Information and Education Specialist."

But, after so many years of friendship with Steve, I guess I should be prepared for anything as far as he is concerned.

One night down here in New Orleans he invited me out to dinner saying we would eat a seven-course "Cajun" meal. Now, I'm about 75% Cajun myself and, as many of you probably know, I go by the handle of Cajun at all OWAA meetings or wherever I meet writers from throughout the nation. But I must confess Steve had thrown me a curve ball with the "Seven-Course Cajun Dinner" bit.

It threw me even more when I discovered that a seven-course Cajun dinner consisted of a pound of Boudan and a six pack of Jax.

Just in case some of you might not know what Boudan is let it suffice to tell you that it is a very unique French type of sausage made here in Louisiana. I presume you know what a six pack is—or will before you leave town.

I think I should probably try to hit the subject as outlined in the title by bringing you up to date on what has taken place in OWAA during the past few years. Many of you, no doubt, still have bitter memories of some of the things pulled on you by members of our organization under the guise of outdoor writers in years past. Unfortunately, many of you were probably victimized by so-called writers in the past and had to take it because of the job you hold. Yours is a job that can get you more black eyes when you fail to cooperate with

someone planning to give publicity to your state than when you do cooperate, and you and I both know you can't afford to take a chance on that black eye.

Many of us in OWAA—legitimate writers—were deeply concerned, too. At one time all it needed to become a member of OWAA was a five dollar bill. You didn't have to write at all—just come up with that five bucks each year and you retained membership. Many of these so-called writers then found out they could get free trips and wonderful hunting and fishing through state fish and game I & E agencies by posing as a writer. After all, if you foolishly tried to pin them down to when a certain story was to appear in a certain magazine they could always lay the blame on the editor for not running it—and all the time he knew nothing of the story or the freeloading writer. I know this to be true—it has happened to me in connection with Southern Outdoors.

Thankfully, this has changed in the past four or five years.

About four years ago scattered dissent with OWAA and the way it was being handled solidified and there was an explosion, figuratively, that blew the organization sky high. Luckily for those of us who think it a great group of guys, the pros banded together and caught the pieces as they came down.

Within the space of one short week OWAA was completely reorganized, a full time Executive Director (Don Cullimore who still holds the job) was hired, the dues were hiked to a more realistic level and we were on our way.

A criteria for membership was adopted and enforced, the hangers-on began to drop out and the organization began to assume a professional air.

During this short four years we have seen OWAA grow in stature as *the* professional organization of outdoor writers of the nation. Our roles list the greats of the game as well as the beginner—just so long as they produce enough material to satisfy membership criteria demands *and* are paid for doing it.

At present, I would venture the guess that more than 90% of our members are pros—this will increase to the "Ivory" figure of 99.9% during the current year as we have undertaken a program designed to make each and every member listed on our roles *prove* he is eligible.

I think one of the things we are now doing that should prove of great worth to all of you is the yearly publication of a directory of our members, listing all pertinent information about each. Some of you are members of OWAA and are familiar with this book and its usefulness. Granted, there are still some outdoor writers who do not belong to OWAA so you don't have a complete check on those who might ask you for trips or pictures or information but, in most cases, you do.

We have also published the first book ever on writing for the outdoor field. It is now the textbook at two or three colleges which offer combined courses in wildlife management and writing. Although there are only a very few colleges offering such degrees, I'm proud to say that OWAA now has three boys attending them under cash scholarships donated by our group.

So, OWAA is now a really professional organization—and one willing to aid you in any way it can. Since its hired staff is composed of professionals, its officers and Board are all active writers, its membership rolls almost clean of so-called writers—then OWAA is aware of many of the problems facing you and are willing to aid you in any way in trying to solve them.

But what of the role of the individual writer and his own I & E department? What can each expect of the other and how is real cooperation achieved? I know this is a problem in many areas—and I might add, there are just as many bad apples in the writers' barrels as there are in your own organizations.

It reminds me of the time the big, fat lady got on the bus and

stepped full force on a tired workman's foot who was seated in the front seat. He squirmed and said, "Madam, please get off my foot."

She turned, looked down her nose and said, "Why don't you put it where it belongs?"

"Don't tempt me, lady, don't tempt me."

Often you would like to put your foot where it belongs as far as some outdoor writer in your state is concerned. And he, especially when he feels he is being given the runaround, often wants to return the favor.

I can only use my experiences in my state as examples of how real cooperation can be achieved between writers and I & E sections and I'd like to ask that someone hold their hands over Steve's ears now as I might accidentally compliment him once or twice in the next few minutes. If he hears them I'll never be able to live it down!

Let me say, also, that I know of at least one and perhaps more writers down here who don't enjoy the full cooperation of *any* section of our wildlife and fisheries commission simply because they haven't earned it—or know how to handle it when it is offered.

Frankly, I feel I know as much about the workings of our inner commission as do people who work for it. I've gained the confidence *and* full cooperation of not only I & E but also the game and fish division, the enforcement section, the director—simply because they know I will not violate a confidence *or* write columns in the newspaper until I have *all* the facts before me.

There are many behind-the-scenes actions that can't be reported to the general public if overall good is to be gained. I think you'll find most of the writers in your state will cooperate more with you—and likewise respect any confidential information you might give them—if they know the facts.

The trouble to you arises when a newsman has to ferret out everything for himself—at such times he writes and lets the chips fall where they may. Unfortunately, in many cases, the chips fall but the axe is being wielded on the I & E section because, after all, yours is the job of public relations regardless of what title has been given your section. I might add I think it a thankless one, too.

So, your problem is one of insuring trust between your office and the writers in your state. Thankfully, with few exceptions that is an accomplished fact in Louisiana, thanks to Steve.

We in OWAA are now working to insure full cooperation with I & E sections throughout the nation. The office in Columbia, Missouri is ready, willing and able to aid you in any way they can. They can furnish information on writers who may contact you, our Ethics Committee will investigate and take action if any members of OWAA should leave a bad taste in your mouths because of any type of non-ethical conduct, our directory not only gives you a short bio sketch of the writer but also, by category, shows those who specialize in certain fields.

Our Writers Manual could well prove to be a blessing to many of you as it reflects in candid detail the secrets, if they be so, of a great many of the top men in the game. Since it is being used as a text in some colleges now it could well serve as a guideline for new men coming into your section—and don't forget the old adage that a dog is never too old to learn a new trick.

It certainly should aid you in news releases and publicity work as you will gain insight into what the writer looks for from these missives. Not that they won't be re-written . . . there has never been a writer, even you and I, who didn't think he could improve on another man's written work. But to know what a top flight newspaper columnist or feature writer is looking for in general should certainly make your job a bit easier.

You'll find, too, that these guys—the ones who won't accept your

work as the end but will rework it—are really the people who sell your program for you. The hack who just runs your release, per se, without any attempt to make them fit his locale or to expand them from personal experience isn't much of a writer—any desk man can do that kind of job.

I feel that OWAA and the I & E sections of all the states of the nation must cooperate with each other to the fullest extent. We have a job to do—an almost impossible one, I might add, if we are to preserve any of the great outdoors for coming generations.

Your job is to supply the factual information and our job is to sell the public on the needs and fulfillment of those needs. Let either of us fall down on the job and we will see the great outdoors become a barren wasteland even faster than it seems to be turning into that now.

Now, if I may—and really there isn't much you can do about it at the moment since I have the mike—I'd like to get a bit personal and ask again for your help.

As most of you know, I am editor of Southern Outdoors magazine. In it we carry a feature each issue entitled State Forecasts and each month you receive a request from me for information applicable to the issue I'm closing out. Granted I work on atrocious deadlines—all magazines do—but I do feel that this section of the magazine is a worthwhile one. My mail proves this when a state does not furnish the information for a particular issue.

It helps the magazine but I'd also like to point out that this is not a one-way street as the section is also a free publicity blurb for your state. After all, publicity for your state and your game and fish department is the real reason for your job.

So, I'd like to ask your full cooperation in furnishing me with this information promptly for each issue.

And I like to ask also that you keep up the good work you have been doing over the years. I'll help you all I can so we can have places to *always take a boy hunting and fishing with us!*

Thank you.

WE ARE MISSING THE BOAT

BY CAPT. CHARLES SEBASTIAN
Grand Isle, Louisiana

To show some of the ways we are missing the boat I would like to start by reading an article which appeared in the 1966 Grand Isle Tarpon Rodeo Handbook. It was written by Jan Sebastian, my wife, whom many of you Southern outdoor writers and public relations people know and love—not as I know and love her—but I am sure you are very fond of her and are grateful to her when she does some of your work for you. Many things she sends out you can and do use verbatim thus saving hours of slaving over that hot typewriter. (Come to think of it—many times she has saved me a little work, and this is one of those times.)

This article of Jan's was originally part of a talk before the Louisiana Tourist Development Commission in Baton Rouge in February, 1966. It shows quite vividly, I think, one way we are missing the boat (especially in Louisiana). That is in failing to recognize some of the best fishing in the world as a Number 1, Grade A tourist attraction.

From time to time as I read, I will add my comments.

Any loyal Louisianian, fisherman or not, hates to admit that he can be outsmarted by (1) a Texan or (2) a Yankee. Yet when it comes to selling our visitors and tourists on the bounty of game and