



# VOWA NEWS

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Virginia Outdoor Writers Association, Inc. Newsletter

www.vowa.org.  
Marika Byrd, Editor

## Neighboring Associations Plan Joint Annual Meeting in 2009

by David Coffman

Mark your calendars for March 20-22, 2009, for a special opportunity to hold joint annual meetings with VOWA and the Mason-Dixon Outdoor Writers Association (M-DOWA). The M-DOWA annually holds a three-day annual meeting in March in the Maryland- southeastern Pennsylvania area. For 2009 they have scheduled their meeting in Hampton, Virginia, at the Hampton Marina Hotel. Since the confirmed dates were the same week when VOWA would have had their one-day annual meeting, the VOWA Board decided to take advantage of this rare opportunity and accept M-DOWA's invitation to hold a joint meeting and provide VOWA members a multi-day annual meeting experience. VOWA will still have their own time for the awards and a business meeting. Our members and potential members can attend as many days as they desire.

This will be good for sponsor and corporate members as our associations have many of the same supporters. Having the two meetings at one site for 2009 provides cost savings for both groups and travel expenses for members as our memberships do overlap.

The joint meeting will offer educational programs, craft improvement, great networking and optional field trip either pre-, or post conference.

President Coffman has formed a special committee with Vice President, Jennifer Hensley, Board

Member, Dan Genest and VOWA-MDOWA member, King Montgomery, to plan the combined 2009 annual meeting.

Please contact any of these joint annual meeting planning committee members with ideas and suggestions to make this a successful venture for both our associations.

## VOWA Writing Competitions

by Marika Byrd

The guidelines for each of the three annual VOWA competitions are being finalized. Check our web site in early September for the latest updates.

Members are encouraged to contact high schools and colleges in their respective areas to "drum up" interest in the competition.

The competition deadline is **January 15, 2009.**

Chairs for the 2008 competition are:

- Marie Majarov—Undergraduate Writing;
- Frank Mundy—Youth Writing
- Dan Genest—Excellence-in-Craft

Mark your calendar now for these competitions. Make a note to help the committees to accomplish their objectives to reward excellence.

## Mark Taylor Elected to National Outdoor Writers Board

by David Coffman

Mark Taylor, Outdoors Editor for *The Roanoke Times*, was

recently elected to the Board of Directors of the Outdoor Writers



Association of America (OWAA). Mark began his three year term on the Board at the OWAA 81st Annual Conference in Bismarck, N.D., June 19-22.

In addition to his informative and insightful articles for the Roanoke-based newspaper and "Wild Life" outdoor blog on Roanoke.com, Mark has served in other leadership positions in the journalism profession. They include a four-year commitment as co-chair of the

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Virginia Host Team for the 80<sup>th</sup> OWAA Annual Conference hosted by Virginia in 2007. The inter-agency team included representatives of tourism and natural resource agencies, outdoor recreation and product related associations. The conference was the culmination of a four year commitment as part of the Governor's initiative to increase tourism and promote the Jamestown 400th Anniversary. OWAA is one of the largest professional outdoor communicator organizations with more than 1,200 members representing the nation's top outdoor-oriented writers, photographers, editors, videographers, radio, TV and film makers. Outdoor product businesses, travel industry, conservation organizations and agency information and education professionals also prominently participate in OWAA events. VDGIF is a Supporting member of OWAA.

Mark is also an active member of the Virginia Outdoor Writers Association. His articles and columns appear in *The Roanoke Times* on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays. Or you can view his [newspaper work and blog online](#).

## MEMBER UPDATE

**Curtis Badger's** book, "A Natural History of Quiet Waters," won third place in the book division in the OWAA excellence in craft awards this year.

An earlier book "Salt Tide" was used in the curriculum at Hampden-Sydney College during the spring semester. It was read in a rhetoric class on creative non-fiction. Salt Tide is what I call a "personal natural history" in that it deals with the natural processes of the barrier islands and salt marshes of the coast, but it also includes a great deal about my experiences growing up along the coast, and my family's tie to the landscape for many generations.

Actually, this is the second time they've used the book in the English department. Two years ago they included it in a class on American nature writing. It's very flattering that they would think highly enough of the book to include it in the curriculum.

The publisher of Salt Tide is W.W. Norton, through its Countryman Press imprint. To review copy you can call Norton at 800-233-4830. Quiet Waters is published by UVA Press and review copies are available by calling Loren Biggs at 434-982-2932.

**Beau Beasley's** articles first appeared in the pages of Virginia Outdoor Weekly in the mid 90's. Since then his work has been published in American Angler, Fly Tyer, Virginia Living, Richmond Magazine, Grapevine, Virginia Wildlife and many others. He currently serves as the Mid-Atlantic states field editor for Eastern Fly Fishing.

His first book, Fly Fishing Virginia: A No Nonsense Guide to Top Waters, was released in May of 2006. Beau lives with his wife and children in Warrenton, Va. He can be reached at [www.beaubeasley.com](http://www.beaubeasley.com).

**Mark Taylor**, outdoors writer for The Roanoke Times, was honored with five Excellence-in-Craft awards at the recent Outdoor Writers Association of America conference in Bismarck, N.D.

For the second consecutive year, the weekly outdoors page Taylor produces for the newspaper was honored as the nation's best.

Taylor also earned a second place award for humor writing for his "Hunting has a Language all its Own" column. "Learning on the Fly," a story about a fly fishing class at Hollins University, was second in the fishing category. Also, "Taking Aim Successfully," a feature about a high school girl who is a champion air rifle shooter, was second in the shooting sports contest.

In the Backcountry Sportsman category, Taylor's "Mountain Jewels" story on brook trout fishing in a remote mountain stream earned a third place honor.

At the four-day conference, Taylor also began a three-year term as a member of the 81-year-old organization's board of directors.

## NEW CONSERVATION OFFICERS GRADUATED

Edited from July 9, 2008, issue of VDGIF Outdoor Report

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) Basic Law Enforcement Academy graduated its fourth class of officers recently. The keynote speaker at the swearing-in ceremony was Mr. Jim Yacone, Assistant Special-Agent-in-Charge of the Richmond FBI office. Clerk of the Circuit Court for Chesterfield County, The Honorable Judy L. Worthington officially swore-in the new officers.

In all, 19 new conservation police officers were sworn-in at the ceremony. These officers completed an intensive 28-week training program that included more than 200 courses.

They took up their assignments across the Commonwealth and proceeded with field training under the direct supervision of field training officers. This is the fourth class to graduate from the Department's Training Academy. VDGIF undertook establishing its own academy in order to tailor the program to the specific needs of conservation police officers.

VDGIF Executive Director Bob Duncan also spoke at the graduation ceremony noting, "This is a very impressive group of individuals. Their training has been rigorous both physically and mentally. We are so fortunate to have this caliber of people joining us at the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries."

The following is a list of the newest conservation police officers and the areas where they will be assigned:

Officer	Assigned Area
William Clayton Barnhart	Franklin County
Christopher Wayne Billhimer	Shenandoah County
Steven Brian Bratton	Eastern Shore
Timothy Scott Dooley	Goochland County
Eric Darrell Dotterer, Jr.	Franklin County
Jessica Patrice Douglas	Dinwiddie County
Sarah Louise Druy	Eastern Shore
Daniel Lee Eller	Stafford/Spotsylvania Counties
Nicholas Scott Farmer	Henry County
John Raymond Goodwin, Jr.	City of Newport News
Beth Joannah Harold	Highland County
Joshua Dalton Jackson	Westmoreland County
Tony Arden McFaddin, Jr.	Botetourt County
Chase Kendal Meredith	Patrick County
Eric Edward Plaster	Roanoke County
Jessica Renee Whirley	Cumberland County
Joseph Patrick Williams	Franklin County
George James Wilson	King William County
Brandon Wayne Woodruff	Sussex County

Conservation police officers must be proficient in a wide array of skills including handling of firearms; crime scene investigations; drug and operating-under-the-influence enforcement; search and rescue; boat operation and boat trailering; etc. Awards were presented at the ceremony to recognize the hard work and proficiency of the recruits and the dedication of instructors and academy staff.



### **VDGIF names Information and Education Division Director**

Lee Walker, who served as acting division director for one year, was named permanently to the job. He has served the agency as Editor of the Virginia Wildlife magazine and Video Production Coordinator since 1987, when he joined VDGIF. Over



the last 10 years he has been the Editor of the Virginia Wildlife magazine. In that capacity he has

administered and supervised and supervised VDGIF's statewide publications.

Among his other duties was the responsibility for the Department's

photographic services and as an Outdoor and Hunter Education Instruction..

Walker has also worked as an adjunct professor for Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Mass Communications, and prior to joining the Department, worked as a news videographer for WTVR-TV 6 in Richmond and KTVH-TV 12 in Wichita, Kansas.

Walker earned his Bachelor's of Arts from Ferrum College. He calls Richmond, Virginia, home. He and his wife of 27 years, Marianne, reside in Glen Allen. His interests include hunting, fishing, photography, decoy carving, and spending time with his son Rob and daughter Beth.

He is a VOWA member.

### **Bob Ellis Named Wildlife Division Director**

VDGIF news release

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) announced that Robert "Bob" Ellis had been named Director of the VDGIF's Wildlife Division. Bob had served as Assistant Director of the Wildlife Division since 1992, when

he joined VDGIF. Over the last 16 years he has supervised biologists managing deer, bear, turkey,



migratory game birds, small game, furbearers and their habitats. In that capacity he has administered and supervised VDGIF's statewide programs on forest wildlife/habitat, farm wildlife/habitat, waterfowl and wetland habitat. He has directed the development of technical reports and papers related to these programs and research that provide information to the public. Among his other duties was the responsibility for administering the compilation and interpretation of technical data on the status, distribution and harvest of wildlife statewide, and for providing support in the development of management and regulatory proposals.

VDGIF Executive Director Bob Duncan observed, "Bob Ellis's background, education, experience and skills elevated him to the top of a very competitive applicant pool. I've worked with him since his arrival at the Department and look forward to working with him in this new capacity." In addition, Bob has served as the VDGIF representative on a number of statewide, regional and national working groups and committees including the state's West Nile Virus Task Force; the Atlantic Flyway Council, having served as chairman; the National Flyway Council, on which he serves as the current chairman; Wildlife Division representative on the Northeast Wildlife Administrators Association;

the national High Path Avian Influenza Steering Committee; among many others.

Prior to joining the Department, Bob Ellis worked for the Florida Game and Fish Commission for 12 years, initially as a regional wildlife biologist in the Everglades Region, then later as a regional director. He earned a Masters of Science degree in Wildlife Biology/Management from Virginia Tech. Following graduation he worked as an extension agent in Grundy, Virginia, with the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service. Bob earned his undergraduate degree, a Bachelor's of Arts in Biology, from Millersville State College in Pennsylvania. Originally from York, Pennsylvania, Bob now happily calls Virginia home. He and his wife of 38 years, Sandy, reside in Montpelier. His interests include hunting, fishing, bird watching, decoy carving, collecting antiques, and spending time with his son Chad, daughter-in-law Tiffany, and granddaughter Sydney.

### **David Norris Recognized for Wetlands Work**

from the VDGIF Outdoor Report

The Virginia Migratory Waterfowl Conservation Stamp isn't only a requirement for hunting waterfowl in



the Commonwealth; it's a source of revenue for waterfowl habitat conservation. Over the past three years since the stamp has been mandatory, nearly Virginia Outdoor Writers Association, Inc. Summer 2008 VOWA News

\$200,000 annually have been placed in the Duck Stamp Fund available for waterfowl habitat conservation work by non-governmental organizations like Ducks Unlimited and by our own waterfowl and wetland habitat staff.

One VDGIF employee who is at the forefront of our wetland initiatives and who was recently recognized by the State Chapter of Ducks Unlimited (DU) is Wetland Project Leader David Norris. At the June 3, 2008, meeting of the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries, Richard Hudson of DU recognized David as DU's 2008 Virginia Conservationist of the Year.

David Norris began his career as a biologist with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission in 1991. David moved to Virginia and began his career with VDGIF as the wetland project leader in 1996. David works with public and private landowners to restore wetland habitats on their properties, provides technical assistance to landowners on how to best manage existing wetlands as wildlife habitat, creates partnerships with agencies and organizations to expand wetland restoration in the Commonwealth, and assists in the writing of grants to expand wetland habitat. In fact, David developed the process for awarding grants from the Virginia Migratory Waterfowl Conservation Stamp program.

David has been involved in numerous projects that protect, restore and enhance wetland habitat on Department property including the Beasley Tract in Virginia Beach, the Blue Wing Tract in Charles City and Cavalier Wildlife Management Area in Chesapeake, all major accomplishments. His favorite accomplishments, however, are the projects completed on private lands where he gets to interact with the landowners. His work with private landowners through partnerships with DU was key to his earning the DU 2008 Virginia Conservationist of the Year Award. The award was formally

presented to David at DU's annual state convention. David congratulations on your award.

## Upcoming Events You Don't Want to Miss

For the latest information visit the VDGIF web site:

[www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming](http://www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming) upcoming events, or check your electronic VDGIF *Outdoor Report* posted free to your email address the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. If not already a subscriber, go to: [www.HuntFishVa.com](http://www.HuntFishVa.com) and click on [subscription link](#).

### August

**22-23** Wildlife Foundation of Virginia Hunter Education Event, Richmond; contact [www.vawildlife.org](http://www.vawildlife.org) web site for details.

**22-24** Mother Daughter Outdoors Holiday Lake 4-H Center, Appomattox; contact: [www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming](http://www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming) events.

**23-24** VAWFA Virginia State Duck and Goose Calling Contests, Bass Pro Shops, Hampton; contact [www.vwfa.org](http://www.vwfa.org)

**22-24** Virginia Outdoor Sportsmen's Classic at the Salem Civic Center. On 23<sup>rd</sup> will include the VOSC Open Turkey Calling Contest sponsored by National Wild Turkey Federation and hosted by Franklin County Longbeards Chapter [www.vaoutdoorsportsmensclasssic.com](http://www.vaoutdoorsportsmensclasssic.com) or call 540-206-2414

**30-31** Wildlife Foundation of Virginia Hunter Education Event, Fulfillment Farms, Albemarle; contact [www.vawildlife.org](http://www.vawildlife.org) website for details.

### September

**4** Woody Biomass for Energy in Virginia, Southwest Higher Education Center, Abingdon. Visit [www.cnr.vt.edu/woodbioenergy](http://www.cnr.vt.edu/woodbioenergy) or John Munsell (540) 231-1611 [jfmunsel@vt.edu](mailto:jfmunsel@vt.edu) for registration information.

**12** Wheelin' Sportsmen Dove Hunt at Fulfillment Farm, Albemarle visit [www.vanwtf.com](http://www.vanwtf.com) for details.

**13** JAKES Event-Page Valley Sportsmen's Club, Inc and NWTf Skyline Strutters Chapter; Pre-registration is required, contact Art Kasson (540) 622-6103 or [artkasson@yahoo.com](mailto:artkasson@yahoo.com).

**13** Lynchburg Outdoors Day, Lynchburg contact: [www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming](http://www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming) events.

**13-14** Eastern Regional Big Game Contest, Southampton Co. Fairgrounds- Franklin for information: [www.vpsa.org](http://www.vpsa.org).

**14** Western Virginia Land Trust's Annual Conservation Celebration, Kegley Farm in Roanoke, contact Western Virginia Land Trust at (540) 985-0000 or e-mail [dperry@westernvirginialandtrust.org](mailto:dperry@westernvirginialandtrust.org).

**19** Wheelin' Sportsmen Benefit Golf Tourney at Vista Links in Buena Vista; visit [www.vanwtf.com](http://www.vanwtf.com) for details.

**20** Fly Fishing Workshop, Dry River – Harrisonburg; contact [www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming](http://www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming) events.

**20** Wheelin' Sportsmen Outdoor Day -- Shenandoah Stone - Raphine for details visit [www.vanwtf.com](http://www.vanwtf.com)

**19-21** 16<sup>th</sup> Eastern Shore Birding

and Wildlife Festival (\*note date change from previous years); Cape Charles, for information: (757) 787-2460 or [info@esvachamber.org](mailto:info@esvachamber.org)

**20-21** SVHEC Hunting/Fishing Expo, Abingdon, for information visit: [www.swcenter.edu](http://www.swcenter.edu).

**27** National Hunting and Fishing Day visit [www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming](http://www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming) events to find an event near you. This is a great day to get an Apprentice License for a friend or family member.

**27** Outdoor Festival- Five County Fairgrounds, Farmville, for information call (434) 547-6770 or visit [www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming](http://www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming) events.

**27-28** Western Regional and State Championship Big Game Contest, Rockingham Co. Fairgrounds- Harrisonburg, for information: [www.iwla-rh.org](http://www.iwla-rh.org)

**29** Woody Biomass for Energy in Virginia, Virginia State University, Petersburg. Visit [www.cnr.vt.edu/woodybioenergy](http://www.cnr.vt.edu/woodybioenergy) or John Munsell (540) 231-1611 [jfmunsel@vt.edu](mailto:jfmunsel@vt.edu) for registration information.

### October

**18** Fishing Workshop, Bear Creek Lake State Park, Cumberland contact [www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming](http://www.HuntFishVA.com/upcoming) events.

### November

**1** Shenandoah Valley Audubon Birding Festival, War Memorial Winchester for information visit: [www.audubon-nsvas.org/](http://www.audubon-nsvas.org/).

**OFFICERS and BOARD MEMBERS**  
(March 2008-March 2009)

<b>David Coffman, Troy</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Jennifer Hensley, Grottoes</b>	<b>Vice President</b>
<b>Steve Richardson, Jr., Richmond</b>	<b>First Vice President</b>
<b>Marika Byrd, CPS, Glen Allen</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Jim Crosby, Crozet</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>Terry Lewis, Burke</b>	<b>Board Chair</b>
<b>Dan Genest, Midlothian</b>	<b>Board Member (2009)</b>
<b>Marie Majarov, Winchester</b>	<b>Board Member (2010)</b>
<b>Milan Majarov, Winchester</b>	<b>Board Member (2010)</b>
<b>Frank Mundy, Broadway</b>	<b>Board Member (2009)</b>

**VOWA NEWS**  
**DEADLINE**

**Friday, November 28, 2008**  
**Submissions to:**  
**Marika Byrd**  
**byrdm@vcu.org**



**“Canoes at the dock” from PrintMaster**