



VOWA NEWS

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Virginia Outdoor Writers Association, Inc. Newsletter

www.vowa.com
Marika Byrd, Editor

OWAA 2007 PLANNING UPDATE

Plans are continuing for the Outdoor Writers Association of America annual conference in Roanoke at the Hotel Roanoke June 18-22, 2007. The VOWA Board is hard at work, with David Coffman as the liaison to OWAA and Team Virginia, to bring about a wonderful and unforgettable experience for those attending the meeting. Additionally, Terry Lewis, Dean Fosdick, and now Jennifer Hensley are involved with some of the planning.

Pre-conference planning was discussed at the VOWA July 19th board meeting. VOWA is planning two outings over the next year, which will include an invitation to members of SEOPA and M-DOWA, our sister organizations.

The fall outing will be October 13-15 in Northern Virginia, at Lorton. See more details later in this newsletter about events under consideration. Details will be forthcoming once they are formalized.

The lodging, for those out of town, is being planned in the Woodbridge area. Chairman of the VOWA Board, Terry Lewis and his wife, are generously offering to host a barbecue at their home on Saturday evening. Sunday will be left free for those wishing to take a sightseeing trip into the D. C. area

In the early planning stages is a Spring Fling in the Waynesboro/Augusta County area. There are so many opportunities from which to choose. David Coffman, Nancy Sorrells and Jennifer Hensley will be developing the plans for this event.

Northern Va. Fall Outing

Ever wondered what there is to write about in Northern Virginia? This is your chance to learn about many great outdoor and historic activities in Northern Virginia, most within a short distance of the D. C. Beltway.

On October 13, 14 and 15, 2006, the U. S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), will host the Virginia Outdoor Writers Association meeting in Lorton, Virginia. In conjunction with the meeting, a free, or almost free, tour of the historic Mason Neck region is planned.

We're exploring the possibility of beginning the evening of Friday, October 13th, with a tour of the beautiful grounds of historic Gunston Hall, on the George Mason Estate.

On Saturday the 14th, we begin the day with a tour of one of the newest jewels in the BLM recreation areas. The Meadowood Special Recreation Area is 800 acres of natural woodland located

only minutes from D.C., and it is one of the few remaining open spaces in the D.C. metro area. Running concurrently with the tour, BLM will hold a Wild Horse and Burro adoption, where suitable applicants may adopt a wild horse or burro gathered from the Western public lands. Also, BLM is planning the Formal Opening of the newest section of the recreation area, and the Secretary of Interior is tentatively scheduled to officiate.

Other events for the day include a demonstration of Control Line Model Airplane flying on the Meadowood Special Recreation Area's grounds and a trail ride on
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Bureau of Land Management, Dept. of the Interior signage. ©Bureau of Land Management



Geese in the field at Meadowwood Special Recreational Area. ©Bureau of Land Management



Horse riding at Meadowwood Special Recreational Area. ©Bureau of Land Management



Horse close up. ©Bureau of Land Management



BLM Wild Horse and Burro adoption. ©Bureau of Land Management

one of the five equine/hiking trails on the property. Be sure to experience this wildlife haven located in the middle of the fast growing urban area that is Northern Virginia, and learn about new writing opportunities.

The Mason Neck is also home to the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority and the Mason Neck State Park, where many recreational activities take place over the year. A sunrise tour of Belmont Bay, which is accessed from the Mason Neck Peninsula, is tentatively scheduled for Saturday. You will have the opportunity to observe the early morning waterfowl and other wildlife in the area. This part of the activities will be provided by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Details on the Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge can be found using the VADGIF new mapping and information system FIND GAME. Simply visit the VADGIF website [www.dgif.virginia.gov] then click on the Find Game icon and follow easy directions to log in. Hint: as a shortcut, once you have logged in, click on Search by PROPERTIES. A drop down box will list all 115 public hunting properties in the system. Click on Mason Neck NWR; a map and

detailed information on the refuge and activities offered will be displayed.

There is a feature on how the innovative Find Game program was developed in the August 2006 issue of Virginia Wildlife Magazine. The article is by our new VOWA member Tee Clarkson. Information on quota hunts to manage deer on refuges and urban archery programs coordinated by VADGIF to reduce deer damage will be available during the weekend.

On Sunday the 15th, you will have plenty of time to visit the Smithsonian, or the newest Monument on the National Mall, the WWII Memorial.

Accommodations are being researched at this time and more details will follow soon. Be sure to mark your calendar and plan to attend this meeting. It will offer many opportunities for you to learn about new story possibilities.

For the members who do not know, your spouse or significant other is invited to attend this outing with you for a long weekend getaway.

Spring 2007 Fling

Nancy Sorrells and Jennifer Hensley developed lots of interesting ideas for events at our Spring Fling tentatively scheduled for the April 19-21 or 20-22, 2007 time frame (the final date has not been determined by the board at “press time”). Many ideas were presented at the July 19 board meeting and were met with enthusiasm.

Tentatively, the first one and a half days all events, will be at Sleeping Bear Lodge/Trayfoot

Mountain Studio on the Western slope of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and 10 miles north of Waynesboro

In the afternoon of the second day we will have our VOWA Shoot-Out. This way, we can work in two mornings of guides turkey hunts (during prime turkey time) and two morning and two afternoon tours of roadways, pathways, wildlife feeding areas and ponds plus side trips to river, wetlands etc.

A geology professor from JMU will explain the difference between the two ponds and where the water comes from; a question and answer session about area geology including our pipe stem rocks will be included.

The third day is added as a stay-over event for members wishing to attend the Annual Fly Fishing Festival in Waynesboro that same weekend.

Board Meeting July 19 Synopsis

Resignation/Appointment

Tom Scanlan resigned his position as a member of the Board of Directors recently. With regret the board accepted it. Tom has come to the time when he would like to quit working so hard and enjoy life and his family more. He was helpful to the Board, along with Dean Fosdick, to get the Undergraduate Writing Contest up and going for its first year in 2005. Tom brought some good and creative ideas and comments to the Board for its consideration. He will be missed.

With a vacancy on the Board, **Jennifer Hensley** was nominated to replace Tom (being at the board

meeting made it easy to “rope” her in since she is one of two who volunteered to help plan the Spring Fling during our annual meeting). Welcome back to the Board, Jennifer.

New Member Contact: The Board is interested in keeping up with our members and it has been recommended that the senior members mentor and keep contact with the newer members--perhaps calling them about events and offering transportation to attend. New members receive a letter from VOWA after they join. Choose a new member and make a new friend.

Honoring Bob Gooch: The board is exploring a way to honor Bob for his long and faithful service to VOWA and the journalism field.

Committee chairs:

Membership--Spike Knuth and Board-at-large;
Youth Writing Contest--Dan Genest;
Undergraduate Writing Contest--Dean Fosdick;
VOWA Excellence-in-Craft--Spike Knuth;
Bylaws--Jim Crosby;
Newsletter--Marika Byrd;
Outings Planning--Terry Lewis and Jennifer Hensley, and
Nominating--Board-at-large.

Change of member information

It is important that all members alike keep the Secretary informed of any changes in their name, address, contact phone numbers and e-mail. We sometimes lose individuals when

mail is returned as undeliverable. An effort is made to locate the member; sometimes we are unsuccessful and we regret losing any member this way.

Craft Improvement

Writing craft improvement articles for the newsletter is one of the newest ideas. The Newsletter Committee is looking for members who can and will offer to write these articles. POW (Pennsylvania) has an article in each newsletter. The most recent articles were about adding news reporting to your skill basket with the feature article genre. Smaller papers do not have the staff to cover some events, and this could be another writing avenue for compensation.

Another article covered radio or television show broadcasting using a panel—the dos and don'ts when considering your panel guests.

Members willing to do this kind of writing can contact Marika Byrd at byrdm@vcu.org.

VOWA 2007 ANNUAL MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

The VOWA Board decided to hold our annual meeting in June 2007 in conjunction with the OWAA conference. David Coffman will work with the planning committee to see about scheduling our business meeting and awards presentations during this time. This is an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for some of our members and the Board

wanted to take the opportunity to “highlight” our winners.

Writing Contest Information

The criteria and rules for all of the VOWA sponsored writing contests are being reviewed before placement on the web site, hopefully in early September. **Please check the web site as some changes have been made.**

The deadline for submissions for the year 2006 will be **January 31, 2007, for all contest entries.**

Submissions not following the guidelines will be disqualified from the competition. **Read and follow the guidelines carefully.**

Excellence-in-Craft: The Board decided to allow members to submit printed articles in the PDF format for the writing categories. This does not apply to the photography categories.

Youth Writing: When these submissions are part of a class writing assignment, then the teachers will be asked to grade and those with an “A” or a “B” can be submitted for the contest.

Strengthened the topics acceptable for the contest to only include: hunting, fishing, camping, canoeing, hiking, birding, natural history; no athletic event topic is deemed appropriate.

Undergraduate Writing—will be reviewed by Dean Fosdick and his committee for recommendations, if any. This submission deadline will also be January 31, 2007.

STEVE RICHARDSON HONORED

W. S. “Steve” Richardson, Jr. was honored on June 14, 2006, for his long and faithful service to the Society of Professional Journalists, the Virginia chapter and the SDX Educational Foundation.

Steve recently retired and was a founder and long member of these organizations.

In recognition of his many contributions, the organizations honored him “with an inscribed paver that will be on permanent display at the headquarters of the **Virginia Press Association** located at 11529 Nuckols Road, Glen Allen, Virginia.”

A presentation certificate was signed by Carl Wright, VPA President.

Member Update

Marika Byrd has recovered nicely from a front-impact collision on May 29—Memorial Day. Her new vehicle has been named “Oriole.” The orange-copper and black SUV is a reminder of the Baltimore Oriole for this bird collector.

King Montgomery has been recuperating from ankle fusion surgery in June. He hopes to be back from the mend very soon. Those wishing to communicate with him can use his U. S. P. S. mailing address.

Bill Rooney has been taking care of his wife, Reet, who became ill several months ago. She has been diagnosed with kidney failure and was in dehydration. Currently she is undergoing dialysis until a

decision is made whether this will be a permanent method of treatment. Our thoughts and prayers are with both Bill and Reet.

While undergoing this, the Rooneys are in the final stages of building their “new home on a hilltop outside the little town of Lexington. We’re selling our Manassas house.”

Bill says, “God bless you all.”

FROM OUR CORPORATE MEMBER

Maptech i3 Touch Screen Navigator Adds XM WX Satellite Weather

A simple touch of the screen calls up a comprehensive suite of weather information throughout the continental United States and 100 miles into U.S. coastal waters, regardless of prevailing weather conditions. XM WX Satellite Weather provides high resolution NEXRAD, wave direction, height, and period, lightning strike location, buoy data, sea surface temperatures, surface analysis weather maps and much more.

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WILDLIFE CENTER OF VIRGINIA ANNOUNCES AUTUMN OPEN-HOUSE SCHEDULE

Reservations Required for Free Tours

The Wildlife Center of Virginia, the nation's leading teaching and research hospital for native wildlife, has scheduled five open houses for Autumn [and September] 2006. These are rare opportunities to see the inner workings of the nation's premier wildlife hospital, as well as meet some of the wildlife that serve as the Center's education staff and ambassadors.

The open houses will be held on:

- Sunday, August 27;
- Sunday, September 10;
- Sunday, September 24;
- Sunday, October 1; and
- Sunday, October 15.

The Center will have three separate sessions each day – at 12:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m., and 3:30 p.m. Each session lasts about an hour.

As a wildlife emergency room and hospital, the Wildlife Center is not usually open to the public, and the seasonal open houses are the rare times when visitors may tour the Waynesboro facility.

There is no charge to attend the open house; however, reservations are required [540.942.9453 or wildlife@wildlifecenter.org]. A limited number of spaces are available for each session; early reservations are suggested.

During the open house, visitors will tour the Center's building, including the medical clinic [examination room, operating room, etc.] In addition, visitors will get to "meet" the Center's education animals – some of the 20 non-

releasable animals that the Center's education staff uses in school assemblies and classroom presentations. Included in the Center's education "faculty" are a Golden Eagle, owls [Great-horned, Screech, and Barred], Red-Tailed Hawks, several different species of snakes, and Virginia Opossums. As most of these animals live in outdoor homes, this part of the tour is offered only if weather permits.

Every year, between 2,000 and 3,000 animals – ranging from Bald Eagles to opossums to chipmunks – are brought to the Wildlife Center for care. "The goal of the Center is to restore our patients to health and return as many as possible to the wild," Wildlife Center President Ed Clark said. "At the Wildlife Center, we treat to release."

The Wildlife Center of Virginia is an internationally acclaimed teaching and research hospital for wildlife and conservation medicine. Since its founding in 1982, the nonprofit Center has cared for more than 45,000 wild animals, representing 200 species of native birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. The Center's public education programs share insights gained through the care of injured and orphaned wildlife, in hopes of reducing human damage to wildlife. The Center trains veterinary and conservation professionals from all over the world and is actively involved in comprehensive wildlife health studies and the surveillance of emerging diseases. Additional information about the Wildlife Center is available at www.wildlifecenter.org.

Photographs Wanted

Members who have photographs or art work which can be used in the newsletter and/or on the web site are encouraged to send them (publication ready) to Marika Byrd, byrdm@vcu.org.

The one picture we have on the web site has been there since we went on-line several years ago. Along with the web site, pictures will make the newsletter more interesting; you can be a part of it.

Youth and Undergraduate Essays on the Web Site

The winning essays from the Youth and Undergraduate writing competition are on the web site. Check them out and you will see why they captured the top spots. The essays will be left on the web site for an extended period until we name the winners of the 2006 competition.

Linkage with Naturally Wild on VOWA web site

In September look for a link between VOWA and Virginia Naturally. Partnering could enhance our standing as a non-profit committed to education and development of our craft." This was viewed as a great opportunity for VOWA.

The contact is Nancy Drumheller, Virginia Office of Environmental Education, Department of Environmental Quality, P. O. Box 10009, Richmond, VA 23224-0019;

The Board felt Nancy Drumheller's idea "that this telephone 804/698-4550 and fax 698-4553; e-mail at nwdrumheller@deq.virginia.gov or <http://www.vanaturally.com/>.

VOWA Board Meeting

Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2007, at 10:00 a.m. (tentative date)

Va. Department of Forestry, Charlottesville, Va.

Phone: 434/977-6555 Fax 434/296-2369

Meeting is in first floor the Resource Protection Conference Room

OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS 2006-2007

Spike Knuth	President
David Coffman	Vice President
Dean Fosdick	1 st Vice President
Marika Byrd, CPS	Secretary
Jim Crosby	Treasurer
Terry Lewis	Board Chair
Steve Richardson, Jr.	Board Member 2008
Jennifer Hensley	Board Member 2008
Dan Genest	Board Member 2007

Check updates at www.vowa.org.

