



Gabe Logan, 15, of Perth, in Fulton County bagged this 24-pound mature gobbler with a 10-inch beard and 11/2-inch spurs during New York's youth turkey hunting weekend. His mentor was NYSOWA board member Jerrod Vila and the bird was the biggest taken in the 16th annual Montgomery County youth hunt. A video of the hunt shot by Vila can be viewed on the New York Outdoors News group Facebook page.



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Contents

President's Report: 3
Vice President Reports: 4-10
Membership News 11-13
Spring Conference Info: 14-15
Supporting Member News: 16-21
Meeting Minutes: 22
Membership Applications: 23-24



We are always looking for members to work with our Conference Committee and assist in hosting Safaris and Conferences in their region. Please email buck@adkhunter if interested.

Calendar

**May 15-18, 2025
Spring Conference
[Lewiston, N.Y.](#)**

[Destination Niagara USA](#)

**Sept. 4-7, 2025 Fall Safari
Rap-Shaw Club on Stillwater
Reservoir, Herkimer County
<https://www.rapshaw.org>**

Renew your membership here:
<https://app.joinit.com/o/nysowa>

NYSOWA President Debbie Brosen



I am so happy to be able to welcome spring and all of the wonderful things that come with it! I love seeing everything in bloom, listening to the sounds of the peepers and turkeys gobbling in the morning, opening of fishing and turkey hunting seasons. I hope you are all enjoying it as well.

It was great to see everyone that was able to attend our first fireside chat of the year. Of course, this “chat” was devoted to our annual conference to provide everyone a chance to ask questions, network, and see what the conference has to offer. I would like to continue to have fireside chats, to provide networking among members and craft improvement opportunities. We do have a couple of fireside chats planned, but no dates have been scheduled yet. The first one planned will be held either late summer or early fall. We will invite scholarship recipients to share their experience and what receiving these scholarships has meant to them. At the end of this year, we will also host another one to provide information/tips on how to enter the EIC and Janice M. Keesler Memorial Photo competitions. We welcome suggestions for new topics and ask that you send them to nysowapresident@gmail.com.

I am looking forward to our upcoming conference in Niagara Falls and to being able to recognize the talents of our members at our annual awards presentation. I want to thank Frank Campbell, Bill Hilts, Jr. and Dan Ladd for planning such a great event for us. Thank you also to all who donated to our silent auction, which helps fund our Bob McNitt Memorial Scholarship Fund. Our annual membership meeting will be held on the last day of the conference, Sunday, May 18 at 7:30 a.m. via Zoom. A link to the meeting will be sent out to all members in advance. We hope you can join us!

I have been getting good feedback on the spotlights I have been sending out on our members. It has been wonderful to learn about our members and their areas of expertise as they are featured in emails. If you haven't yet submitted information to be featured, please email me at nysowapresident@gmail.com.

NYSOWA continues to take steps to grow and network, but we need to ask for your support to help us with this growth. Please reach out to writers, photographers, bloggers, and anyone with businesses in the outdoor industry to ask them to join our organization. Send me any highlights, successes, awards you have won, or anything you would like to share with your fellow members and I will make sure it gets sent out to all members. If you haven't already done so, please check out NYSOWA on Facebook and take advantage of our social media posts.

I wish you all a successful and safe spring season!

Northern Region VP Dan Ladd

Turkey Season, So far

New York's turkey season has gotten off to primarily a wet start, and that goes for the youth hunting weekend, which took place April 26-27. The rain, however, didn't stop young hunters and their mentors from going afield. In Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Washington and Montgomery counties (that this writer knows of) there are youth hunting programs that educate young hunters and often pair them with a mentor.

The Montgomery County event has become one of the most successful, this year seeing 78 hunter/mentor teams take part in the 16th annual event, with 20 of them having success. Among them, was Gabe Logan, 15, of Perth (see cover) who had NYSOWA's Jerrod Vila as a mentor. Vila lured in a 24-pound mature gobbler with a 10-inch beard and 1-½-inch spurs which Gabe anchored with a .410. The bird was the biggest taken during the event. A video of the rainy hunt shot by Vila can be viewed on the NYON group Facebook page.

A storm passing over the Adirondacks on April 27 dropped snow on part of the region, and dampened the youth hunt there. Other than the May 1 opener, the wet weather continued to hamper hunters to some degree during the first week of May, and the regular spring gobbler season. We need the rain, but hunters wish it would come during the afternoon.

Kid's Fishing Derby

The Warren County Conservation Council held it's fourth annual kid's fishing derby April 27, this year seeing 40 kids participate and weighing in 87 fish in 3 hours, a record. The county fish hatchery stocks rainbow trout in the pond at Little Gore Mountain, including some 2-year-olds. The biggest rainbow was a 16-inch-er. Over 80 fish were brought to the scales in three hours, and awards (complete fishing outfits) were given out for the biggest and smallest fish, as well as the last fish caught and the one closest to Noon. The event has become a signature happening in the region.

Fall Safari - Rap-Shaw Club

Mark your calendars now for the NYSOWA Fall Safari taking place in the West/Central Adirondacks at the Rap-Shaw Club, which sits on an island on the remote Stillwater Reservoir. We'll be staying in a series cottages and cabins with all meals prepared, wi-fi and all the comforts of home, with excellent smallmouth bass fishing right out the back door. And, there's more padding and fishing opportunities on the nearby Beaver River impoundments. The dates are Sept. 4-7, right after Labor Day. Meanwhile, visit <https://www.rapshaw.org>



THE BOYS OF WINTER

By Dan Ladd

Here it is early April, and I'm looking back a month to early March, which found me doing something I typically do around the Christmas holiday: getting my ice fishing gear in order.

Actually, I had rounded up everything right after deer season ended and once the holiday-week hunt was over I began to get excited in late January as my favorite lakes began to button up. But things went awry in February thanks to social events and recurring Sunday snowstorms that kept this weekend warrior angler off the ice.

But alas, at last fall's gathering of the NYS Outdoor Writer's Association in Fulton County, several of us discussed coming back to the region for some winter ice fishing. Arriving at a date was a challenge, but we settled on the second weekend in March and thanks to the folks at Fulton County Tourism we landed an Air B&B on Great Sacandaga Lake for the weekend.

The participants included recognizable names from this publication. Contributing writer and media sales team member Jerrod Villa and Capt. Stephen George, both licensed guides from the area, served as our ringleaders. Also joining the foray was Alex

Martin, one of our fishing writers from the Capitol region. Chris Paparo of Fishguy Photos and Charles Witek III, who are both Long Islanders, also came along. For Paparo, a wildlife photographer and lecturer, this would be his first time ice fishing beyond a rare Long Island trip, and for Witek, it had been decades since he had ventured onto the ice.

But here we were, six outdoor scribes about as excited as could be. From the start, Jerrod and I had hoped for some good weather, mainly one of those early March days with temperatures in the 40s, but it didn't work out that way.

Initially, we had planned to drive further up into the Adirondacks and perhaps try for lake trout on Piseco Lake. But as the weekend grew nearer, and the forecast grew windier, a change in plans was in order. Both Capt. Steve and Jerrod felt Caroga Lake, and its splake – the brook trout/lake trout hybrid – might be a better option.

Saturday morning found us on Caroga, setting things up in 10 to 20 mph winds, which were expected to become even gustier. Thankfully, Jerrod had a large, portable ice shanty (along with the kitchen sink) that we were able to fasten down with ice hooks, and everyone brought a chair. This would be a tip-up event, without a lot of jigging.

Alex had the first bit of action, pulling up about a 12-inch splake.



Long Islander Chris Paparo realized his goal of icing a decent fish when he caught this northern pike on Great Sacandaga Lake.

Photo by Jerrod Vila

Then the winds picked up further, blowing snow and ice in the tip-up holes. We estimated the gusts to be 30 to 40 mph and Jerrod and I both agreed it was about the windiest conditions we'd ever fished in.

But, we had the shanty and enjoyed some good conversation and coffee inside of it. By noon, however, we'd had enough and as we were packing things up Chris was able to pull up a second splake, but we were soon off the ice. Back at the cottage where we were staying we enjoyed a smorgasbord of wild boar, Alaskan salmon, oysters and more. And, we recorded Ep. 67 of the Great Northeast Podcast that night.

Sunday morning Jerrod set up his Jack-Jaws on Great Sacandaga Lake, and although it was windy, it was nothing compared to the day prior. Early on about a 28-inch northern pike triggered a flag and Chris was there to reel it in. He and Charlie were the guys who we really wanted to have see some action, so we were content that what little of it there was, they got to enjoy.

Just like our NYSOWA meetings, this little ice fishing weekend went by quick. But we were all glad we were able to get together and feel this might be the start of something new and are hoping to have another good ice fishing season next winter. The ladies are welcome too.

But now it's spring and I have not procrastinated in getting the boats and trout fishing gear together. At this point, it's just a matter of waiting for ice-out. And no wind.

This article appeared in the April 7 issue of NY Outdoor News.



The boys of winter include (l-r) Capt. Stephen George, Charles Witek III, Alex Martin, Jerrod Vila, Chris Paparo and Dan Ladd. In March, the group of NYSOWA members braved strong winds for an ice fishing outing on Caroga Lake in Fulton County.

Photo by Dan Ladd

West/Central Region VP *David Figura*



With the NYSOWA Spring Conference coming soon, I checked in with Capt. Frank Campbell about the Niagara Falls area fishing scene.

Campbell, who along with Bill Hilts Jr. is organizing the conference, said lately the water temperature in the Lower Niagara River has been warming up and the fishing is “getting pretty good” for steelhead, browns and lake trout. In addition, bass and walleye are also being caught, he said.

Meanwhile, at the western end of Lake Ontario (particular at the mouth of the Niagara River and off Wilson and Olcott) Campbell said it is “full-steam ahead” for catching chinook and coho salmon, lake trout and browns. Anglers are also seeing an occasional Atlantic salmon out on the Big O.

“That’s something we haven’t seen in a good number of years,” he said.

As for the upper Niagara River, Campbell said anglers fishing for bass (it’ll be catch-and-release with the regular season opener a month away) are having success with a mix of methods. “And the walleye fishing is setting up pretty well for the opener,” he added.

Bottom line: the Niagara area “offers a potpourri, an impressive mixture of fish species with good numbers and good sizes.”

(Because of the sheer volume of water that flows through it, the 14-mile stretch of the Lower Niagara River is fishable 12 months a year. The last time I fished the river was in 2017 during the dead of winter (January) with Capt. Jeff Draper, a local charter boat captain that Bill Hilts Jr. set me up with.

During that trip, I landed a 14.5 pound steelhead – my personal best. I’m attending the conference and can’t wait to get back and try my luck again on the river.)

Spring turkey season

Spring turkey hunting season opened May 1 and continues until May 31. Hunters are allowed two bearded birds (one per day) and are required by the DEC to report their kills within seven days to the DEC via the DECALS system.

I chatted with NYSOWA member Mike Joyner, a veteran turkey hunter and author of several turkey hunting books, about the upcoming season. He said it’s hard to generalize how many birds are out there and where the best places are to hunt in the Central and Western New York regions. New York offers a wide variety of geography and climatic zones, he added.

According to the DEC, turkey numbers are down but stable. A hunter’s best bet, Joyner said, is doing scouting ahead of time to determine if there’s any birds in the area that you want to hunt.

As for the upcoming spring NYSOWA conference, Campbell has arranged for two hunters each day to try their luck on guided hunts on land where he said birds have been sighted this spring.

The frigid opening day of trout fishing season: This year's April 1 opener got off to a slow start, thanks to a cold front that shut off the bite for many anglers on numerous inland streams and rivers. Temperatures here in Onondaga County dropped nearly 40 degrees from the previous day's high. Those that got out also saw periodic snow flurries.

Personally, I did not get out on opening day. Since then, I've only been out trout fishing only once since for a couple of hours on nearby Skaneateles Creek, which has been low and clear. I caught a 12-inch rainbow. Hope to get out more on local waterways in the weeks ahead.

Three notable spring fishing derbies

The spring fishing season offers a variety of fishing derbies – among them, Walleyefest, on Oneida Lake, the Lake Ontario Counties (LOC) Spring Derby and the National Lake Trout Derby on Seneca Lake.

- Walleyefest, set for May 3-4, continues a tradition that stretches back to 1979 on Oneida Lake connected with the opening of the walleye fishing season. Participants in this year's event will compete for prizes by reeling in walleye and yellow perch. The derby has eight (8) different categories or "leaderboards" for anglers to choose from including a "Women's only", "Military/Veteran/1st Responder" and two (2) "youth" leaderboards.

The event will have its own tournament app called DERBYFISH. Inside the DERBYFISH app is where all fish are entered in the derby using a CPR (Catch, Photograph, and Release) format right on the water in real time.

The derby is offering \$20,000 in cash and prizes and a chance to win a \$34,807 boat for catching a tagged fish. For more, see oneidalakewalleyefest.com.

- Meanwhile, the annual Lake Ontario Counties (LOC) Spring Derby is set for May 2-11. This lake-wide tournament is the first of three LOC derbies on the lake open to the public. There is also the summer (June 28-July 27) and fall (Aug. 15-Sept. 1) LOC derbies.

This year's spring event features \$40,900 in cash prizes – including \$15,000 for the largest salmon.

In total, this year's three LOC derbies are slated to offer \$147,150 in cash prizes. For more on the LOC derbies, see LOC.org.

- Finally, there's the 61st annual National Lake Trout Derby on Seneca Lake, a tradition that stretches back to 1964.

This year's derby, set for Memorial Day weekend, will be held May 24-26. Expected payouts include an overall grand prize of \$7,500 for the largest fish. For more, see laketroutderby.org.

A unique spring bass fishing rule

DEC fishing regulations allow for catch and release fishing for black bass (large and smallmouth) on most waterways in New York apart from the regular bass fishing season (June 15 – Nov. 30).

Lake Erie, with its history of record-size catches, offers a unique offering for bass anglers.

Whirling disease and avian flu

Two stories relating to disease – one involving fish; the other, wildlife – were reportedly recently in Western and Central New York.

*An outbreak of whirling disease at the DEC fish hatchery in Randolph, in Cattaraugus County, will result in about “30 percent fewer brook trout being stocked from state hatcheries across New York this year,” according to a recent story in New York Outdoor News.

The parasitic disease, which affects both trout and salmon, causes fish to swim in circles, and develop blackened tails or have spinal deformities.

Evidence of the disease at the hatchery materialized in March as DEC staff at the Randolph hatchery were getting ready to stock the fish for the spring trout fishing season. Instead of stocking them, DEC staff ended up killing an estimated 60,000 brookie yearlings at both the Randolph and the DEC’s Bath hatchery in Steuben County. DEC said the loss of fish will be “spread out equally” around the state.

The outbreak of the disease has not affected any brown or rainbow trout stocking or numbers at state hatcheries. Due to the “collaborative effects of hatchery managers elsewhere in the state” supplying surplus browns and rainbows, quality fishing opportunities will be available on waterways served by the two hatcheries impacted by the whirling disease outbreak, New York Outdoor News reported.

*Meanwhile, wildlife biologists across the country have been closely monitoring any outbreaks of H5N1 virus (avian flu).

A recent story in the Journal of Wildlife Diseases reported the discovery of the often-deadly virus in four New York State bobcats. It was discovered during blood tests of the animals as part of a DEC study of bobcats in collaboration with Cornell University. One of the four infected animals perished in the wild. The other three were still alive.

In this state, outbreaks of Avian influenza has had a huge impact on domestic poultry, wild birds and a few wild mammals. In 2023, it was detected at the DEC’s pheasant-rearing facility in Ithaca. To stop the virus from spreading, staff at the pheasant farm killed 6,600 pheasants from its breeder flock.

Meanwhile, DEC is currently testing for, and discovered the disease in various other wildlife (in several red foxes, a single raccoon, opossum, skunk, muskrat and a gray squirrel), according to the New York Outdoor News story. DEC warns that the virus can also affect domestic cats, particularly those that feed on infected, or dead wild birds that died from the virus.



Southeast Region VP Tom Schlichter

It has been a cool and windy spring here in the Southeast sector of New York, one that has left many anglers gazing at internet photos of huge bigmouths and bronzebacks already being caught in Niagara County and the Finger Lakes region while the freshwater bite down this way has been slow to get started. Hopefully, it won't be long before the fishing downstate bursts wide open but, so far, things have been fairly tame as far as I can tell.

Then again, you just never know. In a one-hour wade back in early April, I managed to drill ten largemouths on spinners on a 43-degree afternoon with the wind gusting over 20 mph. My last fish measured only 10", but the first nine all ranged between 14 and 17", that's solid action in lower New York for any time of the year. For anyone interested, every fish aggressively slammed a 3/8-ounce Panther Martin Sonic Streamer in red/white. (Full disclosure: I designed this lure for Panther Martin three years ago.)

Of course, there have been plenty of trout available in stocked ponds and inside Long Island's Connetquot River State Park, and these have been willing to cooperate when the wind drops off. Otherwise, though, the sweeter side has been generally stingy – even with bluegill, perch and crappie. Hopefully that will change over the next few weeks.

On the saltwater front, striped bass are just now arriving along the New York coast. The action remains spotty in Raritan Bay as I write this, partially due to the windy weather, no doubt. Some resident fish are starting to chew now, but migrating schools are still lacking for the most part. A reminder about New York striper regulations for 2025: the daily possession limit, both in the Hudson River and the marine sector, is 1 per angler. In the Hudson River north of the George Washington Bridge, the size limit is 23" to 28" and the season closes November 30. In marine waters, the size limit is 28" to 31" with an end date of December 15.

Angler's have found New York's April spring blackfish season a little slow to get started, too. Again, the wind and relatively cold water seem to have conspired to make for a tough bite. As I write this, with less than a week left before the spring season closes at the end of April, water temperatures along Long Island's South Shore are still below 50 degrees in many places. On the bright side, some anglers have expressed concern that large female 'tog make up a significant part of the spring catch. This year, at least, it looks like most of those females will get a chance to spawn without being harvested. Hopefully, the light spring pressure will help set up a solid fall when the "white chin" season reopens come mid-October.

On the hunting front, regular spring turkey season runs from May 1 – 31 in Suf-

folk County, as well as north of the Bronx-Westchester County line. That's good news for hunters, of course, but especially on Long Island where this will be only the third year offering the opportunity to pursue the big birds during the spring.

According to a recent press release by NYS DEC, Long Island's wild turkey population is an example of the State's successful restoration and management efforts. Indeed, it has been a major accomplishment. Populations of wild turkey on Long Island disappeared in the late 19th Century due to a reduction in forested habitat as these environments were cleared for colonial farms and firewood. In the mid-1990s, DEC trapped approximately 75 wild turkeys in upstate New York and released those birds at three locations in Suffolk County. The Long Island population is now estimated at more than 3,000 birds and growing.

Even still, there appears to be a new concern on the horizon for hunters, and not just on Long Island. A new study from researchers at the University of Georgia suggests turkeys may be adapting to hunting pressure, which could make them harder to pin down. Although the study tracked turkey in Georgia Wildlife management areas, I've been wondering about this myself in recent years - and I'm fairly sure it's been happening in my local woods for some time. I imagine it could be happening in your more pressured hunting areas as well. In short, the birds are learning to avoid places where they are in the most danger, like field edges.

If nothing else, the study makes a great excuse as to why some of us (well, me at least) failed to get a bird last fall.

By the way, a quick internet search on the subject found our own Mike Joyner, author of three books on turkey hunting, mentioned as believing the UGA study appears legit. The column, by Steve Featherstone, appears on [Syracuse.com](https://www.syracuse.com).



Since Long Island inaugural spring turkey hunt in 2023, NYSOWA Membership Secretary Charles Witek III has been trying to bag his first ever spring gobbler. He connected this year on May 2.

Photo by Charles Witek III



Spring regular turkey season opened on May 1 in New York. While the outlook is bright, a new study says the birds are learning to adapt to hunting pressure. Tom Schlichter outsmarted this 24-pound Long Island Tom with a bow.

Photo by FFelicia Scocozza.

NYSOWA Membership News

NYSOWA Scholarship Committee Update

The NYSOWA Scholarship fund currently has a balance of \$5,700 – a fund the Scholarship Committee hopes to bolster with money earned from the Silent Auction of donated items and services at the Spring Conference -- and hopefully through other fund-raising measures this coming year.

Each year, the Scholarship Committee year aspires to send two kids to the DEC's summer camps; give out a \$1,000 scholarship to a college student in an outdoors-related field of study and send one person to the DEC's three-day, Becoming and Outdoors Woman (BOW) weekend.

Online registration for the DEC Summer Camps (which cost \$350 per child) was March 23. We didn't receive any recommendations for candidates from the NYSOWA membership. Since then, Deb Brosen and myself (David Figura) reached out to local sources and came up with what we felt was a good alternative.

We're co-sponsoring two boys (ages 14, one from Onondaga County; the other from Greene County) to attend the NY Trout Waters Summer Camp, set for July 6-11 at Big Valley Lodge in Hale Eddy on the West Bank of the Delaware River.

Lessons will be given on fly tying, fly fishing, entomology, ecology, and conservation. All equipment, lodging and meals will be provided.

Each evening campers will have one-on-one stream experiences with veteran Delaware River anglers. Presenters include some of the top professional guides, fly tiers, and authors from the Catskill area.

Cost for attending the camp is \$800 per kid. We are splitting the cost with two Trout Unlimited Chapters (Iroquois and Clearwater). Thus, the total cost to NYSOWA is \$800.

As for the NYSOWA academic scholarship, Scholarship Committee member David Taylor has sent out queries to several colleges within the state with noteworthy outdoors-related curriculum, seeking applicants. The deadline to apply is June 1. A final determination of who gets the scholarship will be made by the committee later this year, probably before the start of the fall semester.

Finally Deb, who has given seminars at past BOW events, said she has a new female NYSOWA member lined up to attend this fall's BOW weekend. We have a couple of alternatives if that doesn't work out.

**Questions about the Scholarship Committee can be directed to
Committee Chair David Figura at 315-470-6066,
or email davidjfigura@gmail.com.**

Call for Submissions - The Conservationist

Editors at Conservationist invite NYSOWA members to contribute to the long-running, bi-monthly magazine of the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

The Conservationist reflects the mission and goals of DEC and New York State. Typical topics include fishing, hunting, natural history, nature viewing, and all forms of outdoor recreation. Other topics will be considered if they relate to the natural, environmental, cultural, or historical resources of New York State.

If interested, please email a pitch outlining the subject matter of a proposed article to magazine@dec.ny.gov before submitting an unsolicited draft. They look forward to hearing from you.

Member Spotlights

Tony Colyer-Pendas
Assistant Editor – New
York State Conservationist



Ned Librock – Catching
Dreams Charters

Visit www.nysowa.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 8, 2025

New Book- Tales From The Roost- Roost'n Time Tales

**Joyner Outdoor Media Proudly Announces the book release of
Tales From The Roost- Roost'n Time Tales, by Mike Joyner**

McGraw, NEW YORK – Joyner Outdoor Media announces the audiobook release of *Tales From The Roost- Roost'n Time Tales*, by McGraw resident Mike Joyner

A new book, *Tales From The Roost*, comes out as the fourth in the Turkey Woods storybook series of the 2025 release in paperback, hardcover, and kindle book offerings. The author is very pleased to announce the title is in production in the audiobook format which is a natural extension of the storytelling of the title. It is expected to be released in June.

Publisher's Summary - In his twenty-first book, award-winning author and outdoorsman Mike Joyner continues his journey in pursuit of the wild turkey. From end to end of the hunt, Joyner shares a first-hand account of each adventure in the turkey woods. Each chapter weaves personal experiences with gobblers in the great turkey woods. A veteran hunter, Joyner brings the trials, tribulations, challenges, excitement, and thrill of each hunt as he travels America in search of the majestic and often frustrating wild turkey. Each memorable story is richly crafted with vivid descriptions, making this a must-read for those who love to hunt these magnificent birds.

All book formats are available on Amazon
<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0F1MLQNMH>

Joyner can be made available for media requests by emailing: info@joyneroutdoormedia.com

NYSOWA Spring Conference May 15-18, 2025

Where: Niagara Crossing Hotel and Spa, 100 Center Street, Lewiston, NY

Call to reserve your room soon – there is a limited block of NYSOWA rooms. Be sure to ask for them at 1-716-754-9070. Deadline for room block was April 29. Continental breakfast daily 7-10 a.m.

May 15 (Thursday night): Arrive by 6 p.m. for a welcome mixer at the hotel sponsored by Destination Niagara USA.

May 16 (Friday morning) activities:

4 a.m. Turkey hunting for up to 2 hunters.

6:30 a.m. Lake Ontario fishing options out of Wilson for up to 4-5 anglers.

7:30 a.m. Lower and Upper Niagara River Fishing Options for up to 15 people.

7:30 a.m. Shore fishing options in the Niagara Gorge for up to 4 anglers. Only for the hardy.

Some spouse options will also be available and will be offered at the meet and greet in Lewiston when everyone arrives. Some ideas include a tour of Niagara Falls, shopping at Fashion Outlets, and Lewiston shopping.

Friday afternoon:

12:30 p.m. Lunch at the 3-F Club, 904 Swann Road, Lewiston. Craft Improvement Sessions to include a brief talk and interview opportunity with Ernie Calandrelli who with recently named to the NWTF Turkey Calling Champion Hall of Fame. John Sander will be given a workshop on launching his new fishing website.

Friday evening:

4 p.m. Erie Canal Flight of 5 Lock Tender Tour

5 p.m. Lockport Locks and Erie Canal Tours – Arrive for a boat tour on the Erie Canal, celebrating its 200th Anniversary in 2025. Dinner to follow along the Erie Canal in Lockport. Sponsored by the Erie Canal Corporation.

May 17 (Saturday morning) activities:

4 a.m. Turkey hunting for up to 2 hunters.

6:30 a.m. Lake Ontario fishing options out of Wilson for up to 4 anglers.

7:30 a.m. Lower and Upper Niagara River Fishing Options for up to 15 people.

7:30 a.m. Shore fishing options in the Niagara Gorge for up to 4 anglers. Only for the hardy.

Some spouse options will also be available and will be offered at the meet and greet in Lewiston when everyone arrives. Some ideas include a tour of Niagara Falls, shopping at Fashion Outlets, and Lewiston shopping.

Saturday afternoon:

Lunch at The Brickyard in Lewiston at 12:30 p.m.

Afternoon activities at 1:30-2 include kayaking, birding, hiking, biking, fishing.

6 p.m. Saturday evening awards banquet will tentatively take place at Niagara Crossing. Sponsored by the National Shooting Sports Foundation. Start time for dinner may need to be adjusted.

May 18 (Sunday) – Membership meeting at 7:30 a.m.

Note: Frank Campbell, Niagara County Outdoor Promotions Director, has finalized room

details including room rates. They will be roughly \$100 per night (single or double). You will be required to make your own room arrangements at this discounted rate for members. If you have any questions, give Frank a call at (716) 523-0013.

If you are looking for specific story opportunities not seen here, or you would like to see some expanded, call Frank. This is Niagara Falls USA, home to the best spring salmon fishing in the Great Lakes, some of the best smallmouth bass fishing in the world, outstanding river fishing for trout in small boats, and access to spectacular fishing in the upper river above Niagara Falls, primarily for smallmouth bass. The Niagara River Corridor, internationally recognized as an Important Bird Area, offers great bird watching opportunities. Less than an hour away is the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge, flanked by the Tonawanda and Oak Orchard State Wildlife Management Areas – 20,000 acres of prime public real estate. This is also home to the Erie Canal, celebrating its 200th anniversary of operation in 2025. We will be celebrating everything outdoors in Niagara Falls USA and this will be a great conference to attend – as a first timer or as a wily veteran media professional. It's also a great spot to bring your significant other! Check out www.niagarafallsusa.com for more information.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____

Sign Up for Excursions- NYSOWA Conference 2025

Fishing and hunting sign-ups – Friday morning

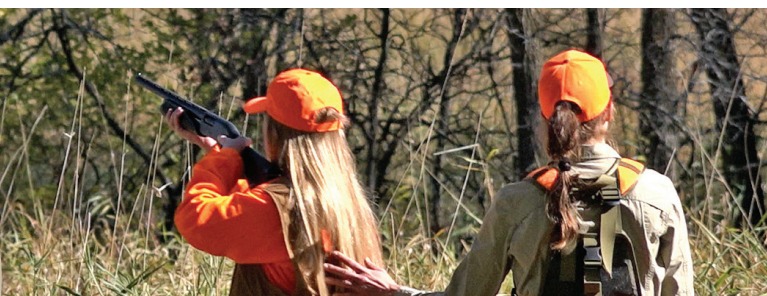
- ☐ Lower Niagara River trout and/or bass fishing (12 spots)
- ☐ Upper Niagara River bass fishing (3-4 spots)
- ☐ Lake Ontario salmon and trout fishing (4-5 spots)
- ☐ Spring Turkey Hunting (two spots)

Fishing and hunting sign-ups – Saturday morning

- ☐ Lower Niagara River trout and/or bass fishing (12 spots)
- ☐ Upper Niagara River bass fishing (3-4 spots)
- ☐ Lake Ontario salmon and trout fishing (4-5 spots)
- ☐ Spring Turkey Hunting (two spots)

Please return to Frank Campbell at fcampbell@niagarafallsusa.com or text him at (716) 523-0013. You can also snail mail this to Frank at Destination Niagara USA, 10 Rainbow Blvd., Niagara Falls, NY 14303.

NYSOWA Supporting Member News



Help cast a legacy for tomorrow's hunters and anglers

The outdoors community faces a critical challenge. As demographics shift, fewer people are buying hunting and fishing licenses. This decline threatens the funding vital for managing our natural resources and preserving wildlife habitats. But, there's hope. The Outdoor News Foundation is taking action.

Our mission? To cultivate the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts and conservation leaders. Your generous donations power our impact, directly benefiting young people through essential education and resources at environmental learning camps, environmental scholarships for future outdoors journalists, fish and wildlife biologists, and other stewards of our natural world, and free access to Outdoor News.

Join us in turning the tide. A single donation of \$25 helps fund a child for a year, and ensures a vibrant future for our sporting heritage. Together, we can share the wonder of the wild with the next generation of sportsmen and women.

Make your mark. Donate now and help us forge a lasting legacy for the outdoors community.

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?

Visit us online at OutdoorNews.com/Foundation-Home or snap the QR code!



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Member Spotlight

Redding Reloading Equipment

President's Note: It is my pleasure to shine the NYSOWA Spotlight on Robin Sharpless and Redding Reloading. As you will see from reading Robin's information, he has been a long-standing member and supporter of NYSOWA. Once again, we can thank Redding Reloading for their generous support of co-sponsoring our Excellence in Craft Program. Without the generosity of such organizations, we would not be able to offer this great program. Please take a moment to read the very humbling note Robin has provided below, and Thank You Robin and Redding Reloading for your continued support
- Debbie Brosen, NYSOWA President

A Bit About Redding Reloading Equipment Cortland, NY

First and foremost, we are proud to be a Supporting Member of NYSOWA. Redding Reloading Equipment was founded in Virgil, NY in what is described as a former agricultural building, "Read Chicken Coop", by Burr Bement. In 1949 the firm moved "over the hill" to Cortland and today although much expanded, maintains that small original building as our current office. With manufacturing space surrounding it on one level in one large structure, the factory is comprised of many additions through the years, a reflection of truly American exceptionalism.

So much of the growth and success of the company rest firmly on the shoulders of Richard W. Beebe who purchased the company in 1974. An engineer, consummate shooter and outstanding hunter who truly blended avocation and vocation to create a highly respected, world leader in the field of metallic cartridge reloading. Richard's love for the sport coupled with his drive for always making things better, created his vision of the company that is easily summed up in the words "innovation and quality". So much of the Redding product line we now use, know and love were Richard's own ideas born of his Bench Rest competing and hunting throughout North America.

Moreover, these ideas which turned into products and many times, Patents always shared one critical design aspect: the ability to improve the reloaders outcomes while making the process simpler and easier. The company is famous for so many of its innovative products, like the Competition Seating Dies which were designed by Richard and Patented for their unique ability to hold the bullet true during the seating process which was then controlled by a micrometer. That very micrometer which makes the process of getting a proper length so precise is also so much easier than adjusting a standard seat plug. The 2400 Case trimmer with a Micrometer to very quickly and easily adjust case length to one thousandth of an inch is also an example of Redding's more precision and less effort products.

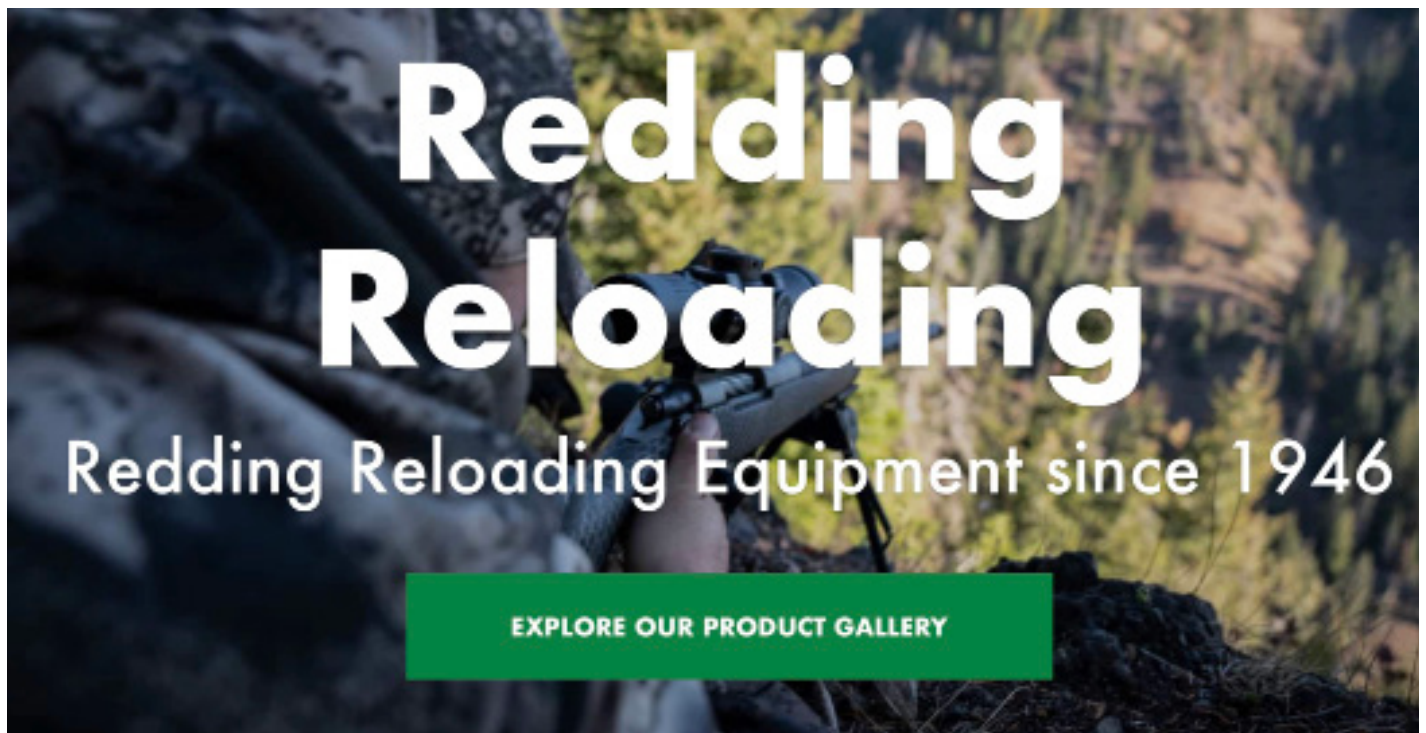
Next year will mark 80 years for the company still in Cortland County, NY where it was founded. Sadly, we lost Richard last October but his wife Sherri, who has over 50 years with the company, has taken the reigns and the future will continue bright and always focused on upholding Richard's incredible legacy of made well and made in America.

Many NYSOWA folks have known me for a very long time. I quite often wear my NYSOWA Pewter belt buckle given to me by my dear friend, now passed, Ron Kolodziej. Yes, it has the old typewriter logo and was done by the rather famous NY sculptor/artist Sid Bell, famous for his Ithaca Gun Grip caps.

I personally became involved with NYSOWA back in about 1991 when I was a part of the team that

revived H&R 1871 (Harrington & Richardson and New England Firearms). This group was the first one that I had the company join and I have always had a great sense of family within the ranks of the organization. After 9 plus years of H&R, I actually came to NY with the Ithaca Gun Company and quickly joined NYSOWA as a supporting member as well. I have been with Redding for 16 years and we, of course, have been a supporting member for just as long. Ed Noonan, Ron, Wayne Brewer, Dick Nelson and far more than I can name here, were counted as friends not simply business acquaintances.

As I look at the directory, the In Memory page is filled with more and more great folks that NYSOWA provided me with the absolute privilege to know, not just to meet, but to have many great outings hunting and fishing all over our state usually tied to the conferences. The stories they have generated fill my memories with so much joy. I started this NYSOWA journey over 30 years ago and I could not imagine a greater group of caretakers of our outdoor heritage. It remains a great privilege to be associated with New York's own Redding Reloading Equipment and the NYSOWA.



Media Contact;
Robin Sharpless
Redding Reloading Equipment
1089 Starr Road Cortland, NY 13045
<https://redding-reloading.com>
607-753-3331

Free Media Fish Camp, Fun Times in Chautauqua, NY – 2025 INFO

Apr. 18, 2025: Chautauqua, NY - Chautauqua County's outdoor world is a thrilling blend of world-class fishing, hunting, camping, kayaking, hiking, and more, offering a unique experience for outdoor media professionals.

Visitors who fish will find Lake Erie walleye, tributary steelhead and brown trout, colossal smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, bountiful musky, supersized yellow perch, behemoth lake trout, limit catches of crappies, inland trout, wild brook trout streams, abundant CWD-free whitetail deer, plentiful black bear and ample numbers of wild eastern turkey.

Our diverse range of fishing resource locations, including Lake Erie, Chautauqua Lake, Cassadaga Lake, Findley Lake, Bear Lake, Silver and Walnut Creeks, Cassadaga Creek, Cattaraugus Creek, Chautauqua Creek, Dunkirk Harbor, Barcelona Harbor, and Sunset Bay, ensures there's something for every angler.



Don't miss the chance to meet our experienced charter captains and outdoor guides. They'll share their favorite spots and secret tactics, ensuring you'll reel in some big fish and create unforgettable memories. Plus, you're welcome to bring a cooler to take your catch home.

Come visit us. Meet the Chautauqua Outdoors at a custom-designed Outdoor Media Camp just for you. We provide cash compensation for your NYS fishing license, lodging accommodation, a gas travel allowance, and a daily food stipend to make your trip affordable. We have revised our media camps from 2 annual lodgings for 10 guests at a lakeside cabin to 3 annual lodgings for up to 4 guests each at a lakeside hotel



venue. This change allows us to accommodate weather changes, especially with Lake Erie. You will realize you are knocking on heaven's door when you arrive here for so many reasons. There are more than 20 wineries, several microbreweries and distilleries. It's grape and hops country! Great food, giant and plentiful fish, blooming sunsets, unforgettable adventure.



After your visit, one more surprise. We offer an all-cash prize outdoor media contest! The first prize is a substantial \$500, followed by \$250 and \$125. Write up your visit and send us a tear sheet, podcast, TV show or your usual venue media protocol.

Outdoor Media Contact: Dave Barus - Fishing & Hunting Promotions Associate, email: dbarus35@yahoo.com; Cell: 716-597-4081. **Visitors Bureau Contact:** R. Andrew Nixon, Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau-Executive Director, P.O. Box 1441, Chautauqua, NY, 14722; Office: 716-357-4569; email: nixon@tourchautauqua.com; Web Info: <http://www.tourchautauqua.com>; [www.Facebook.com/Tour.Chautauqua](https://www.facebook.com/Tour.Chautauqua).

Apply Now to Become a BoatUS Foundation Kid's Life Jacket Loaner Site



BoatUS®

Help your community have access
infant, child and
young adult-sized life jackets at no
cost

SPRINGFIELD, Va., April 8, 2025 – Marinas, waterfront restaurants, boat clubs and other businesses wishing to make an impact on boating safety in their home waters can apply now to become a BoatUS Foundation Kid's Life Jacket Loaner program site. Supported by BoatUS member donations, the program offers a simple way to help children and young adults get the right-sized life jacket when they go boating, sailing or fishing for the day or weekend.

"Sometimes boaters may not have a correctly-sized life jacket for every younger guest aboard," said BoatUS Foundation program administrator Lynne O'Hearn. "That's where local groups partnering with us can help ensure everyone has the right fit for safety. You want to avoid giving a child in a too-big life jacket, which they may be able to slip out of."

There are currently more than 575 BoatUS Foundation life jacket loaner sites across the U.S. and becoming one is easy and free: Apply at BoatUS.org/Life-Jacket-Loaner.

Approved locations will receive 12 children's life jackets in a variety of sizes from infant to youth, as well as signage and a local publicity kit. Life jackets are replenished every year as wear and tear takes its toll.

What's the catch?

In addition to requiring life jackets be stored in a secure, protected storage area, you must be willing to help the Foundation track life jacket usage with an easy clipboard sign-out system and help maintain the program by providing feedback when life jackets need replacement.

Firearm Industry Economic Impact Rises 379% Since 2008

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The total economic impact of the firearm and ammunition industry in the United States increased from \$19.1 billion in 2008 to \$91.7 billion in 2024, a 379 percent increase, while the total number of full-time equivalent jobs rose from approximately 166,000 to nearly 383,000, a 130 percent increase in that period, according to a report released by the NSSF®, the firearm industry trade association.



On a year-over-year basis, the industry's economic impact rose from \$90.5 billion in 2023, to \$91.7 billion in 2024. The firearm industry has broader impacts throughout the economy. It supports and generates business for firms seemingly unrelated to firearms, at a time when every job in America counts. These are real people, with real jobs, working in industries as varied as banking, retail, accounting, metal working and printing among others.

The firearm and ammunition industry paid nearly \$11 billion in business taxes, including property, income and sales-based levies. An additional \$886 million was paid in federal excise taxes, which directly contribute to wildlife conservation.

“Our industry is a vital economic contributor to every state and every community. These are companies employing men and women from all walks of life and they prove daily that the American firearm and ammunition industry is strong,” said Joe Bartozzi, NSSF President and CEO. “This industry proudly provides the means for law-abiding citizens to exercise their Second Amendment rights. Our industry enables Americans to engage in the American traditions of recreational target shooting and hunting, and we are the primary source of wildlife conservation funding in America. The growth of the firearm industry equals more jobs that add to our local economies, averaging \$68,300 in wages and benefits, up from \$67,500 reported last year. Since 2008, federal business tax payments increased by 340 percent, Pittman-Robertson excise taxes that support wildlife conservation by 152 percent and state business taxes by 238 percent.”

The annual Firearm and Ammunition Industry Economic Impact Report provides a state-by-state breakdown of job numbers, wages and output covering direct, supplier and induced employment, as well as federal excise taxes paid. Access the full report [here](#).

About NSSF

NSSF is the trade association for the firearm industry. Its mission is to promote, protect and preserve hunting and the shooting sports. Formed in 1961, NSSF has a membership of thousands of manufacturers, distributors, firearms retailers, shooting ranges, sportsmen's organizations and publishers nationwide. For more information, visit [nssf.org](https://www.nssf.org).

Media contact:

Mark Oliva

202-220-1340

NEW YORK STATE OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
April 28, 2025

President Deb Brosen called the Zoom meeting to order at approximately 7:05 p.m.

Recording Secretary Glenn Sapir took attendance.

Present were: President Deb Brosen, VPs Dave Figura, Dan Ladd and Tom Schlichter, Membership Secretary Charles Witek, Treasurer Stephen George, Recording Secretary Glenn Sapir, Immediate Past President Chris Paparo, Directors Steve Piatt, Leo Maloney, Jerrod Vila and Steve Zahurak and Interim Director Bill Hilts, Jr. Absent was Director Mike Joyner.

President Deb Brosen led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

Under “Communications” on the agenda, Deb related a personal experience and reiterated the message that we should continue to live our lives to the fullest.

Under “Election of Directors, Officers and New Members” on the agenda, Deb reminded us that Bill Hilts, Jr. must be nominated at the Annual Meeting to fill Megan Postol’s vacant seat, for which the term ends in 2027.

Under “Report of Officers,” a motion was made and passed unanimously that we dispense with the regional vice president reports as they will appear in the next newsletter. Stephen George, however, gave the Treasurer’s Report, which detailed that in our Community Savings checking account we had \$21,123.09, and in our Key Bank scholarship account we had \$5,747.17. He stated that he had a check from Redding Reloading Equipment for \$1,500 as sponsorship of the EIC, and had to reimburse Deb for expenses and had to write checks for the EIC and Photo award recipients.

Under “Committees,” Dave Figura, as chair, gave the Scholarship Committee report. Dave reported that the committee had aspired to send two youths to DEC conservation camps, award \$1,000 to a college student living in or matriculating in NY who is studying an outdoor-related program and send one woman to the Becoming an Outdoors Woman program. The latter two have not yet been awarded, and instead of sending two youths to a DEC camp at \$350 per camper, the committee opted to send two youths to a fly-fishing camp on the Delaware River, at a cost of \$800 per camper, only \$400 of which NYSOWA is responsible for, as Trout Unlimited chapters in the areas where the campers live are each co-sponsoring their local camper.

Deb explained the process of accepting members according to the bylaws as part of the Membership Screening Committee report. The committee, which was confirmed to be the president and three V.P.s, is to review any new member application. Any approved application must be sent to all board members. If no board member objects to the applicant’s admission to NYSOWA within seven days, the member shall receive a welcome packet.

Deb mentioned that she would like to see guidelines developed for all committees,

but did not pursue how this will be accomplished. Dan mentioned that there is a guide for hosting and chairing conferences that appears on our website.

Deb stated the committees she was aware of, as well as the members of those committees. Mentioned were the Nominating Committee of Dave Figura, Dan Ladd and Glenn Sapir, with no chair; Scholarship Committee of Dave Figura, chair, David Taylor and Deb; the Conference Committee of Dan and his fellow regional VPs; and Social Media/Recruitment Committee, chaired by Sue Bookhout, Stephen George and Steve Featherstone; and Fundraising Committee of Chair Steve Zahurak, Glenn, Dave F. and Deb.

Dan gave the Conference Committee report, stating that Bill Hilts, Jr., and Frank Campbell did all of the work, and it appears to be a great upcoming conference. Dan mentioned that the Fall Safari is planned for Sept. 4-7 on an island in Stillwater Reservoir in the Adirondacks. We have no proposals for conferences or safaris for 2026. He would like to host the 60th anniversary conference in 2027 in Warren County, and he has already had interest from localities there.

Under Unfinished Business, Deb delegated the idea of investigating online auctions and 50/50 raffles to the Fundraising Committee.

Deb reported that George Franke must be nominated for Honorary Membership at the Annual Meeting. She will prepare Leo's earlier nomination submitted to the Board.

Leo Maloney reported on the frustration of attempting to renew our tax-exempt status. We are being stonewalled by Gray and Gray Associates. He does have a CPA working on it on a gratis basis.

Glenn reported that Bill Suitor and his wife will be attending the awards banquet and that a plaque has been ordered to recognize Suitor's longtime service to NYSO-WA.

Under New Business, Deb clarified that Bill Hilts, Jr., Dan Ladd and Leo Maloney are Life Members, not Honorary Members, and are thus entitled to all of the privileges of membership, including serving as directors and officers.

Glenn reported that Ducks Unlimited is apparently renewing its \$1,500 EIC sponsorship as well as sending a print for the Silent Auction.

A motion was made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Glenn Sapir, Recording Secretary

APPLICATION FOR NYSOWA MEMBERSHIP



Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 E-Mail: _____
 Website: _____
 Do you receive payment for your services? _____
 Other Writer Affiliations: _____

CATEGORIES (Note: fillers are not considered to be articles in applying for Writer status)

A. Newspaper _____ Attach 12 tear sheets

City: _____

Circulation: _____ Column Name: _____

Published: _____ Daily _____ Weekly _____ Monthly _____ Periodics

B. Magazine _____

Staff position: _____ Freelance: _____

_____ National: Attach two tear sheets. _____ Regional: Attach four tear sheets.

C. Lecturer – Attach copies of a published schedule or six paid presentations.

Staff position: _____ Freelance: _____

D. Photographer _____ **Illustrator** _____ **Artist** – Attach proof of publications of film/video, 8 stills, or prints.

Staff position: _____ Freelance: _____

E. Book Author – attach a copy of the Publishing House Catalog listing the book.

Name of Book: _____ Publisher: _____

F. Editor/Publisher – Attach a copy of a current issue of magazine/newspaper.

Name of Publication: _____

G. Radio/Television – Attach audio/video tape documenting (4) 30 minute or (8) 15 minute programs. Station:

_____ City: _____

H. Public Relations Agency – Attach copies of (6) news releases.

Staff position or occupation: _____

I. Electronic Publishing – Attach 8 published outdoor columns or articles in last 12 mos. Electronic

Publication: _____ web address: _____

Applicant's Signature _____ **Date:** _____ **Active**

Specialties

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. Hunting | <input type="checkbox"/> b. Firearms/Shooting | <input type="checkbox"/> c. Archery/Bowhunting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. Freshwater fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> e. Saltwater Fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> f. Flyfishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> g. Boating | <input type="checkbox"/> h. Camping/Backpacking | <input type="checkbox"/> i. Wilderness Survival |
| <input type="checkbox"/> j. Trapping | <input type="checkbox"/> k. Outdoor Travel | <input type="checkbox"/> l. Outdoor Politics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> m. Nature | <input type="checkbox"/> n. Environmental Affairs | <input type="checkbox"/> o. Natural Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> p. Water Sports | <input type="checkbox"/> q. Cooking | <input type="checkbox"/> r. Nature |

Areas of Expertise

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. Book Author | <input type="checkbox"/> B. Magazine Editor | <input type="checkbox"/> C. Newspaper Editor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D. Public Relations | <input type="checkbox"/> E. Television | <input type="checkbox"/> F. Electronic Media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> G. Magazine Columnist | <input type="checkbox"/> H. Newspaper Columnist | <input type="checkbox"/> I. Freelance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> J. Radio | <input type="checkbox"/> K. Illustrator | <input type="checkbox"/> L. Lecturer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> M. Photographer | | |

Sponsor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Active Sponsor: _____

Please enclose a check, made payable to NYSOWA, with this application and mail to:

Charles Witek III, 1075 Tooker Ave., West Babylon, N.Y. 11704

631-827-8664 - charleswitek@gmail.com

Join online at <https://app.joinit.com/o/nysowa/members>



APPLICATION FOR NEW YORK STATE OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSN. SUPPORTING MEMBERSHIP

Supporting Membership Does: \$60.00 per year.

Our company or organization, wishing to support the New York State Outdoor Writers Association (NYSOWA) in its program to further the causes of conservation and wise use of our natural resources, and to promote outdoor recreation activities, hereby applies for Supporting Membership.

Name: _____
Position: _____
Company: _____
Address: _____

City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____
Fax: _____
E-Mail: _____
Website: _____
Contact: _____

Please outline your organization's interests and activities in the outdoor field:

Applicant Signature: _____
Active Sponsor: _____

Please enclose a check, made payable to NYSOWA, with this application and mail to:

Charles Witek III, 1075 Tooker Ave., West Babylon, N.Y. 11704
631-827-8664 • charleswitek@gmail.com

Join online at <https://app.joinit.com/o/nysowa/members>